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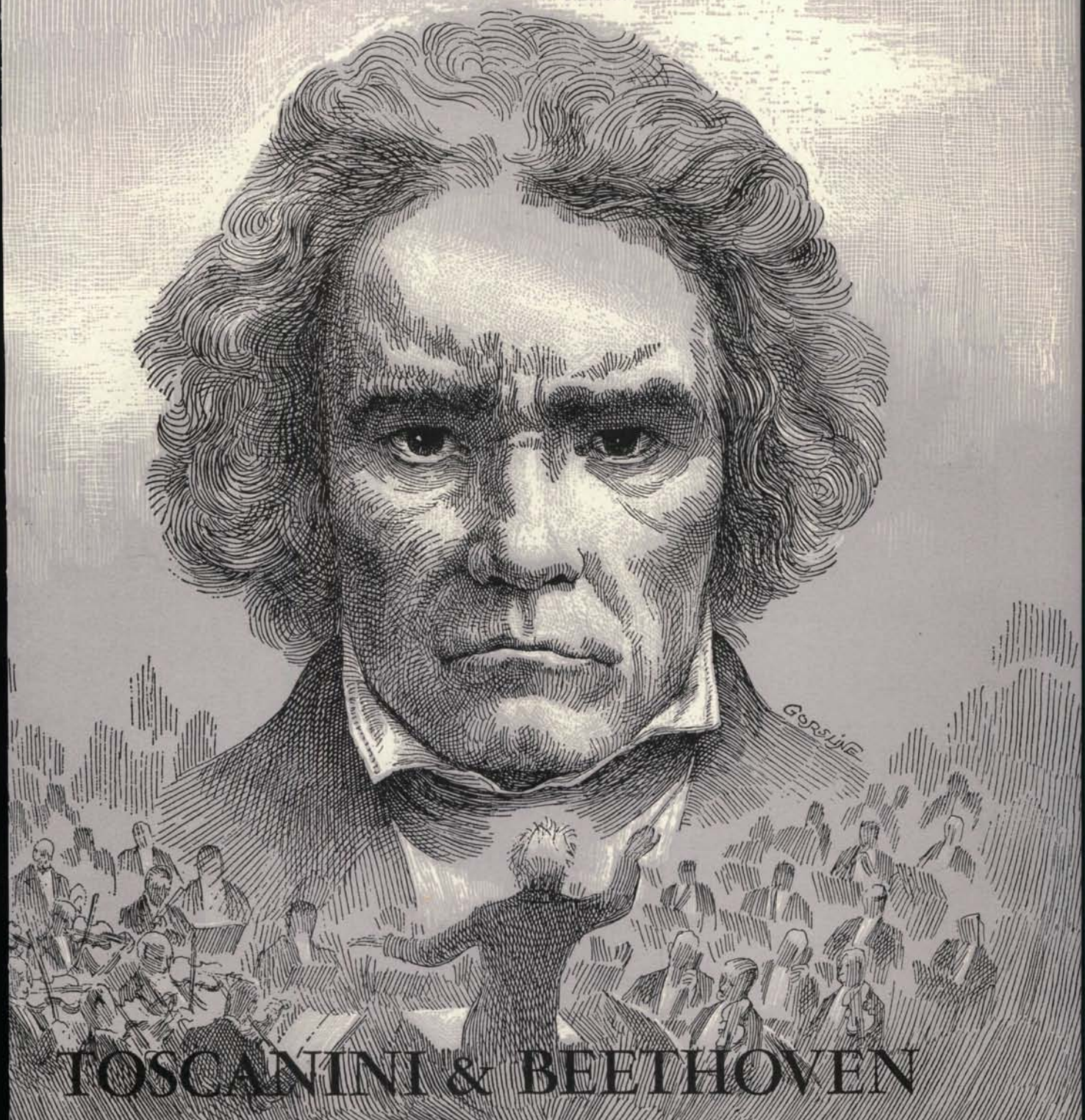

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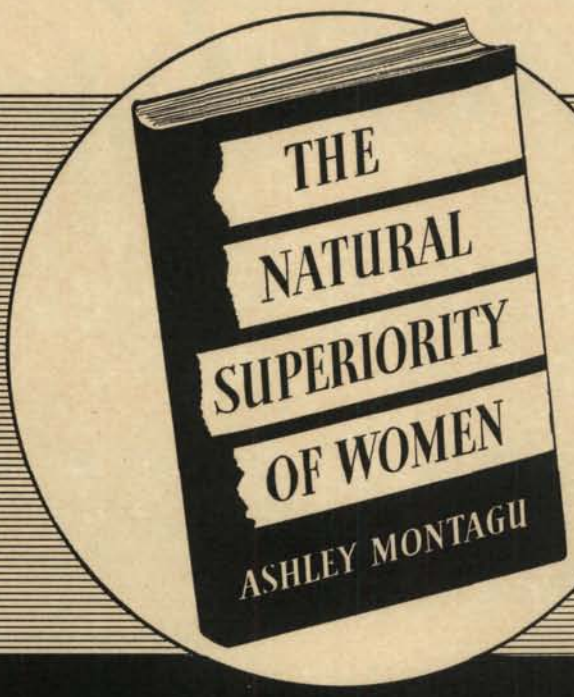

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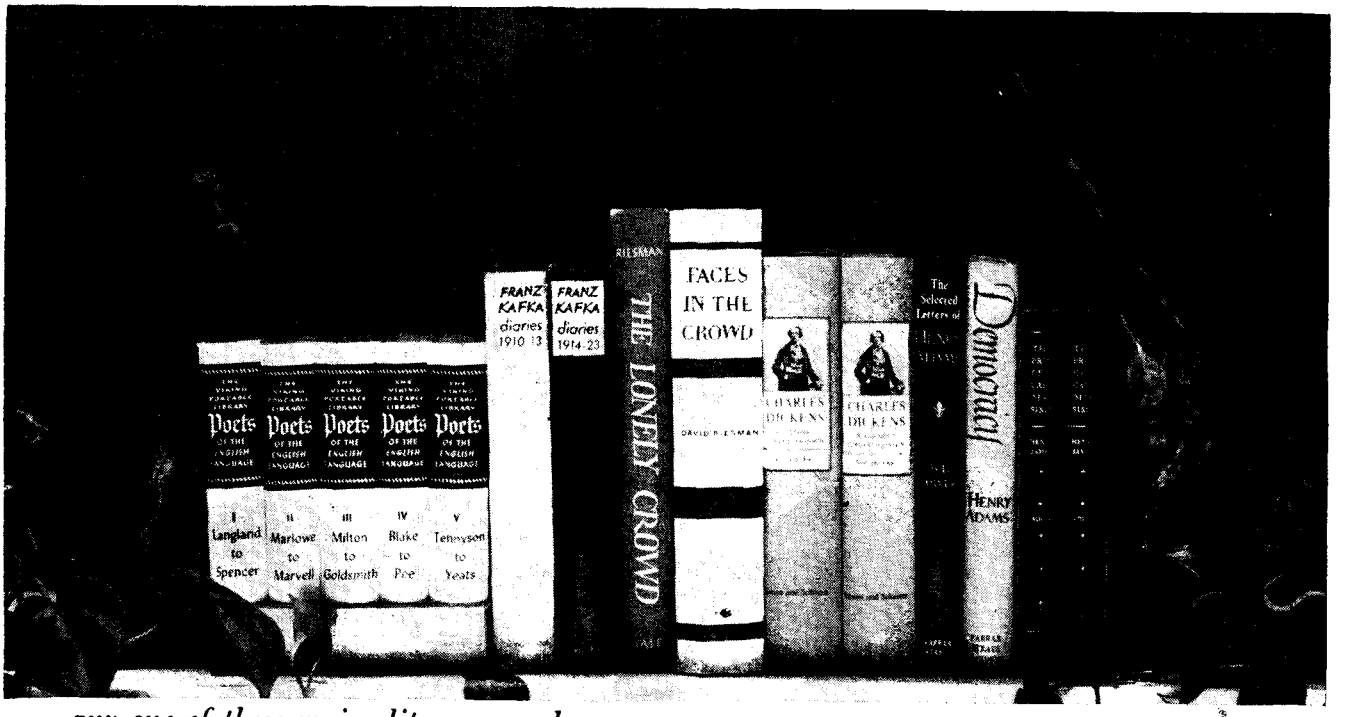

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One of the most difficult and dangerous things a reader can attempt is to urge on others his enthusiasm for a humorous book.

¶ Take, for example, William Cooper's just-published novel, "The Struggles of Albert Woods." I read proofs of this book last winter, and ever since I have been trying various ways to get others to read it.

¶ I have described it as a college story about an ambitious scientist on his way up the academic ladder at Oxford.

¶ I have said it is that rare thing, humor without malice.

¶ Assuming a professorial mien, I have pointed out that it is in the tradition of 18th Century fiction, with frequent asides by the author about his hero.

¶ Then, with a nudge and what approximates a leer, I have hinted about the most hilarious love scene since the invention of the motor car.

¶ And always, smiling knowingly, I have emphasized that in every possible way this is a book for the adult reader.

¶ As a result of these efforts, about half of my friends agree that "The Struggles of Albert Woods" may well be the year's funniest book; the rest stonily report their risibilities untickled.

¶ Since you are a *Saturday Review* reader, I think you will enjoy this book. If you do like it, send me a note with the address of a friend you would like to share it with. I have a few spare copies to give away for the most interesting letters.

L. L. Day
EDITOR-AT-LARGE

"The Struggles of Albert Woods," by William Cooper, is published by Doubleday & Co., 575 Madison Ave., New York 22, New York, also publishers of the "Thorndike-Barnhart Comprehensive Desk Dictionary".

(Advertisement)

The Saturday Review

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Good News

▶ In Brazil plans are under way to build a television broadcasting station to carry educational and cultural programs exclusively. The programs, to be transmitted from Rio de Janeiro, will include educational films, news, and classical music. This is in sharp contrast to the attitudes of many American states which remain indifferent to the use of such stations.

▶ In Belgium all members of the teaching profession have just received a circular letter sent by the Ministry of Public Instruction stressing the importance of teaching about the United Nations and its specialized agencies. The Ministry's recommendations point out the leading role of educators in the formation of new generations which can think in terms of international cooperation.

▶ American school teachers have pledged $53,515 dollars in gifts to underdeveloped countries to be paid through UNESCO's Gift Coupon Scheme. A drive by the Department of Classroom Teachers for overseas aid through this unique project won support of members in twenty-five states. Donations will supply needed educational and scientific equipment to areas including the Philippines, the Middle East, and Mexico. And at U. N. Headquarters the third Technical Assistance Conference, attended by representatives of some seventy countries, was opened on February 26. Governments represented were invited to contribute toward the $25,000,000 target for the 1953 program of U. N. technical assistance. By the morning of February 27 nearly $21,000,000 had been pledged.

▶ Cuba's first institution for medical examination and diagnosis, with methods patterned after those of the Mayo Clinic, was recently opened in Havana. Seventy-four of Cuba's finest specialists compose its staff and it is equipped with the best of modern equipment. Like the Mayo Clinic, charges are made in accordance with the economic resources of the patient.

▶ The Government of India has decided to establish a National Academy for the development of Indian literature. Sahitaya Academy will develop cooperation between literary associations, universities, and cultural organizations both in India and abroad; it will arrange new translations of literary works and will encourage research in Indian languages and literature.

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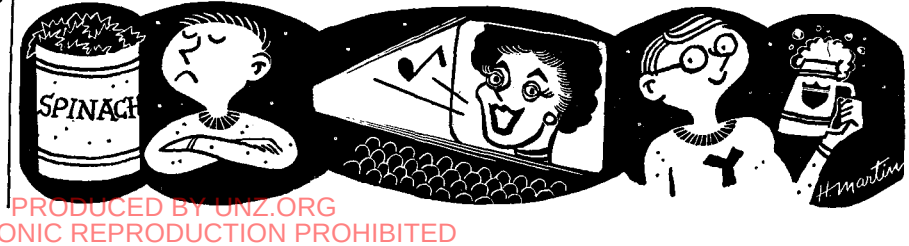
NOTES IN A RIGHT-HAND DRAWER

A REPORT RECENTLY FEATURED in *Quick* applauds children's sagacity in turning their noses up at spinach, explains this is simply "nature's way of protecting them from its harmful effects." Experiments with rats, conducted by two eminent British doctors, the report continues, prove conclusively that "too much spinach upsets the body's storing of calcium and could lead to weakened bones." Wouldn't a million kiddies go for this report in book form if an enterprising publisher of juveniles made it available to them? . . . Best cartoon of the month was drawn by Whitney Darrow, Jr., for *The New Yorker.* It shows a twirp of about eight reveling in a copy of what obviously is Dr. Arnold Gesell's "The Child from Five to Ten" and exulting to a contemporary at ease on a nearby chaise, "Boy! What a stinker I'm going to be *next* year!" . . .

MOST REWARDING NEW PLAY of the spring season: "Picnic" by William Inge. Funniest: "The Seven Year Itch." . . . A single scene in the revival of "Room Service" which failed, wherein a famished producer and his stooges fell upon a meal hijacked from another hotel suite, provided more belly laughs than the whole depressing and ludicrously overrated "The Fifth Season" across the street. . . . Another highly touted show that bored me to distraction was "Hazel Flagg." . . . Ethel Merman, in the screen version of "Call Me Madam," is so absolutely wonderful she'll lift you clear out of your seat. . . . If you can stand one more picture about a cranky but lovable old Catholic prelate, "Trouble Along the Way" unquestionably has its moments. Charles Coburn is pinch-hitting here for Barry Fitzgerald, and a heartwarming performance he turns in. John Wayne, furthermore, is first rate as a hard-boiled football coach who knows exactly what it takes to put together a team that can compile a winning record in the big time today, and they've spiked a familiar brew with some very funny dialogue. . . . All this picketing and blacklisting of Charlie Chaplin's "Limelight" would have made me mush ten miles through a blizzard, if necessary, to see it, no matter how bad it might have been. I prefer to make up my own mind on what pictures, or actors therein, I am going to patronize. As a matter of fact, "Limelight," too talky and too long, is still one of the best pictures of the past three years, and Chaplin himself, of course, an incomparable mimic. Don't avoid it for the wrong reasons.

LAJOS ZILAHY, distinguished Hungarian author of "The Dukays," returns to the lists this week with "The Angry Angel." Zilahy's old home in Budapest was the very first to be demolished by invading Nazis in World War Two. They razed his retreat in the back country next. He effected his escape to America in spite of all their efforts, however, and writes as skilfully in English today as he did in Hungarian. . . . The Yale University Press is readying a manuscript called "Drinking in College," a product of three years' study of the drinking customs and attitudes toward liquor of 17,000 men and women students in twenty-seven American colleges. There is no record of how often the authors got pickled in the course of their investigations. And three profs I know are petrified lest a sequel be forthcoming on "Drinking by the Faculty." . . . The Yale Press also is publishing John Slocum's and Herbert Cahoon's "A Bibliography of James Joyce," holding its release until June 16. That, I'm sure you'll recall, is "Bloomsday"—the date on which all the events in "Ulysses" took place. (The year was 1904.) . . . Pursuant to a recent note on novels with a university background William Price suggests Hester Pine's "Beer for the Kitten" and Morrison's "Stones of the House"; T. S. Harding adds Nelson Crawford's "A Man o



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Learning"; Larry Harris warns "Don't overlook 'Hangsaman' and 'The Groves of Academe' "; Pyke Johnson nominates "The Geese in the Forum", and W. T. Scott declares that George Weller's "Not to Eat, Not for Love" is still tops in his book.

HAMILTON COLLEGE'S experiment with a self-service, honor-system students' book store is off to a heartening start. Meanwhile I learn from Mary B. Deaton that Wisconsin State, up in Superior, has been conducting a similar operation for three solid years with entirely satisfactory results. Every month or so I receive a letter from some teacher or professor bemoaning the fact that no facilities exist at his accredited seat of learning for the sale of new books. Wherever that condition prevails, it seems to me, there is an excellent opportunity for instituting a system similar to those at Hamilton and Wisconsin State. All it requires is enterprise. Directors of the shops already in existence will supply the details of organization; publishers and jobbers will supply the merchandise. . . . Speaking of teachers, Colonel Duffy hazards a description of the kind that keeps lower grades going and that will do until a better one comes along. "A teacher," he says, "is Courage with Kleenex in her pocket, Sympathy struggling with a snow suit, and Patience with Papers to grade. A teacher really does not mind sniffles, squirmings, stomach-aches, spills, sloth, and sauciness. Neither does she disintegrate before tears, trifles, fights, futility, excuses, parents who spout, little boys who shout, and little girls who pout. Most of all, a teacher is one who likes somebody else's children—and still has strength left to go to the P-TA meeting. Thank Heaven for the teachers." . . . To which TRADE WINDS says, "Amen," and adds, "How about seeing to it that they get a living wage?"

WHEN GENERAL MOTORS unveiled its new 1953 models to throngs of prospective customers at the Waldorf and in Miami, the big brass in the home office didn't have to depend upon

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Author! Author!

AN author's inventiveness can get him in trouble. Hans Ruesch's first novel, *Top of the World*, which was about Eskimos, was cheered by the *New York Times* and *Herald Tribune* and by Thomas Mann — to name only a very few. So enthusiastic was its reception that Ruesch had a hard time convincing people that he had never been North: that he had met his Eskimos in the New York Public Library.

Now we are publishing his second novel, *The Racer*, and readers, alert to Ruesch's remarkable imagination, suspect him of having explored the track through the tome. But not this time. This novel is the result of first-hand experience.

The Racer is about the aristocrats of European sport — the drivers who live by risking their lives for a *Grand Prix*. It has about as much relation to the Indianapolis Speedway as Piper Heidsieck has to grape juice.

Ruesch has been as close to the subject as you can get. He began his racing career when he was nineteen and competed in more than 100 events, sometimes as an independent, sometimes as a member of the famous Ferrari "stable." He won 27 races, among them the *Grand Prix* of Bucharest, the Finnish *Grand Prix*, the British Mountain Championship and many others. He has twice held the world record for "kilometer from standing start," which he wrested from the late John Cobb. A serious accident in 1938 forced him to give up the sport.

Virginia Kirkus calls *The Racer* "high-octane excitement," but it's also a novel which may well take its place in the small choice gallery of adult fiction on life-and-death sports — a gallery which up to now has been principally furnished with books about bull-fighting. The bulls can now move over.

As to Ruesch's next novel, no one can predict. It may take place on the moon. And no one can say now whether or not it will be based on first-hand experience.

The Racer is available in a hardbound edition at $1.50, and a paperbound at 35¢. See it at your bookstore or newsstand.

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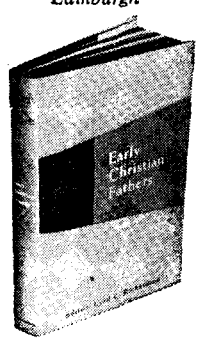

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Two lives: LUCY SPRAGUE MITCHELL *and* DR. WESLEY CLAIR MITCHELL

Essandess takes pride in publishing a book that at once fills two gaps in the roster of important American biography. It is the story of two distinguished careers and a wonderful marriage.

The book is called *Two Lives*. In its pages the economist, the social scientist and the informed reader can, for the first time, follow in detail the career of the brilliant WESLEY CLAIR MITCHELL, dean of American economists.

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Through Mrs. Mitchell's warm and modest narrative, readers will see how husband and wife, working together in their separate fields, each made important contributions to American life.

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How she became co-founder and guiding spirit of New York's Bank Street College of Education which helped liberate children from the old theories of pedagogy. (Remember the principal who said, "I don't care what the children study, so long as they don't enjoy it"? LUCY SPRAGUE MITCHELL has devoted her life to putting a stop to *that*.)

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TWO LIVES: The Story of Wesley Clair Mitchell and Myself by Lucy Sprague Mitchell (575 pages; 28 photographs) is available at all bookstores, price $5.

—ESSANDESS

roseate reports from over-enthusiastic minions to know exactly what the public was saying about their product. G.M. planted "opinion samplers" all over the premises, with tiny mechanisms, called Minifons, concealed in their pockets. The Minifons recorded all comments made within range on little spools of magnetic wire, which were promptly dispatched to headquarters. . . . A couple of "minifons," judiciously distributed at forthcoming authors', publishers', and booksellers' conventions, could ruin the egos of half the sensitive plants in the literary world!

JOHN KIERAN is writing a book for Houghton Mifflin on one of his favorite subjects: The Natural History of New York City. Directed toward the general reader rather than the specialist, John's book will limn the meteorological and geological background, and then range through all the astonishing forms of wildlife visible within the city limits to those who only know where to look: trees and wild-flowers in bewildering variety; birds (over 200 species in Central Park alone); mammals, snakes (represented in all five boroughs); fish, insects (including some of the world's rarest and most beautiful butterflies), etc. . . . Kieran, a prolific fellow, especially on days when the ball game is called off on account of rain, is also collaborating with his bride, Margaret, on a life of James Audubon for the Landmark Series. . . . Still on the subject of nature in the raw, Yale's Dr. Leon F. Whitney, in his new book for Garden City, "All About Guppies," states unequivocally, "One of the many satisfactions of owning guppies is their completely open and fascinating sex life. Since guppies bear their young alive instead of laying eggs, and since each female has a litter about once a month, their tank is virtually a submarine delivery room with all the drama of birth constantly taking place." Any questions?

ANTHONY BUMP, the midtown publisher, had his nose pressed against his second-story window, busily superintending the riveting job on a building under construction across the street, when his secretary interrupted him, as usual, waving an open letter. "Remember that fellow who did such a successful book for us a few seasons ago on 'How to Cut Your Income Tax in Half'?" she asked. "Well, now he's proposing a sequel." "Good enough," said Bump without leaving the window. "What's he going to call it?" The secretary answered, " 'My Fifteen Years in Alcatraz'."

—BENNETT CERF.

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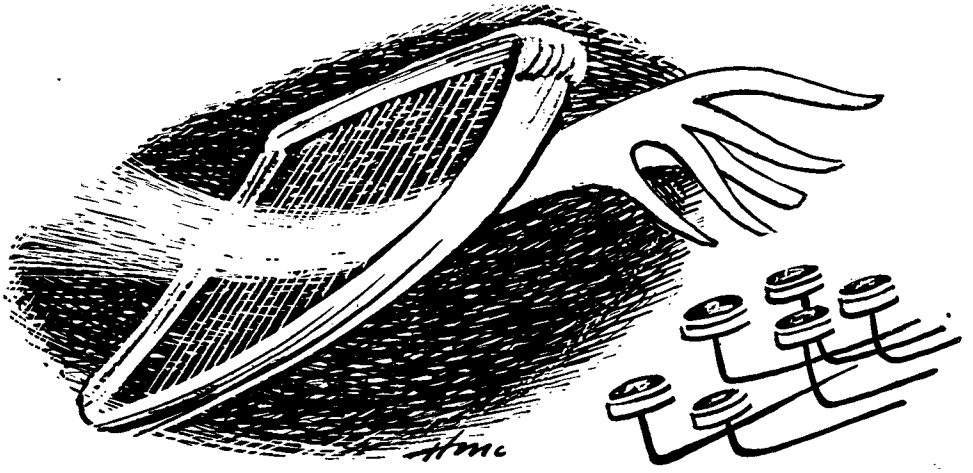
The Saturday Review | APRIL 25, 1953



Inspired and Uninspired Writers

BURGES JOHNSON

began his literary career at the turn of the century and has been active since as an editor, author, poet, and teacher.

AS I hark back through fifty years of contact with groping writers in editorial offices as well as in college classrooms, I hear one phrase repeated again and again—"I'm sorry the manuscript isn't ready, but I just didn't get inspired." Youngsters facing a classroom assignment, adults striving to meet an editor's demand apparently believe that inspiration comes from without, and at uncontrollable moments. As though a muse of poetry or drama or painting or music sits upon a pink cloud somewhere in the infinite, reaches down her delicate fingers, and touches the brow of some favored one who then proceeds to take dictation.

I am certain that this notion is a false one, and for a moment I regret I am not a psychologist, fluent in the basic English of that fraternity. For I know too that there is such a force as inspiration, but that it comes from within and not from without, and is to a great extent controllable.

In this opinion I disagree with that oracle among oracles, the London *Times*, which in a recent editorial implies that inspiration is an outer force working upon the poet's inner mind. And I disagree, too, with those pedagogues who cite against me the derivation of the word itself—"a breathing in." But if word derivation be any argument, then one cannot give a supercilious look without eyebrows or engage in trivial conversation except where three roads meet.

I was traveling in a railway coach one day with Vachel Lindsay, at a time when teaching was a new experience for me, and he was prodding me with questions about a "writing" classroom. I told him about that frequent excuse of my dilatory young writers, and asked him, by the way, whether he himself had ever been consciously inspired.

He took my question seriously: "Often and often," he replied, "if we can agree upon the meaning of the word." Then he cited this bit of personal experience. His boyhood was spent, he said, in a Midwestern city having a population more than 50 per cent Negro. His small-boy playmates were mostly Negroes, and no child could have had more delightful companions. They were rollicking, imaginative, sympathetic, and loyal in their friendships. But as he grew older he became aware of social pressures which would force him to give up these companions, and he resented the fact. Gropingly he began to philosophize about the contribution these people might make to our society in this melting pot of ours, if they were allowed to melt. He rated high their primitive simplicity, their high spirits and their spirituality. Then he moved away from Springfield, Illinois, and other speculative fancies filled his mind.

Years afterward, so he told me, he was traveling in a Pullman car, and his mind was idle. Perhaps the rhythm of the car wheels affected him, perhaps the Pullman porter caught his attention; at any rate, he found himself humming a couplet—

Then I saw the Congo creeping
through the black,
Cutting through the forest with a
golden track.

Without conscious effort he had suddenly composed what was to him a complete and satisfying poem, and it came from inside and not outside of himself. To any other person it would seem trivial and without beauty or meaning. But to him it was a condensation of all that youthful philosophizing, stored away for years in some mental compartment. "Then I saw the Congo"—all the basic savagery of a people civilized more lately than ourselves; "Through the forest with a golden track"—the light of Heaven reflected on black waters.

So then he sat him down and proceeded by sheer drudgery of composition and the techniques of the rhym-

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ster to interpret his couplet to others. The result is a poem expanded from two lines to 152, broken up into sections, "Their Basic Savagery," "Their Irrepressible High Spirits," "The Hope of their Religion." "Big black bucks in a wine barrel room, barrel house kings with feet unstable."

The poet Dante, some years before Vachel, relates this experience in a letter to a friend. For a long time, he says in effect, he wanted to write poetic lines worthy of his lady-love. Again and again he reviewed in his mind her various charms, but never could find a suitable approach, so finally he gave up the task as hopeless. Long afterward he was walking beside a stream, thinking of many things, but not at that moment of his lady, when suddenly he found himself saying, "Ladies who have experience in love, of my own lady I would sing to you." Evidently some secret compartment of his mind had continued with that task his conscious mind had abandoned, and had found a novel approach which furthered the writing of his poem.

Hamlin Garland once described to me a device he often used in his novel writing. "When the spring runs dry," he said in effect, "when I am weary of composition and empty of ideas, and especially when I come to an impasse in my narrative and do not know which way to turn, then I stop trying. I wait until I am bedded down for the night, with the light out. Then I review what I have already written, until sleep comes. In the morning I find that some unsleeping part of my mind has gone on with the story, and the impasse has ceased to exist."

But the commonest device among experienced writers for establishing continued contact with that hidden storehouse of the mind is to form what amounts to a physical habit. I recall an overnight visit to Joe Lincoln in his Hackensack home when he excused himself right after breakfast: "Mrs. Lincoln will take care of you for a couple of hours," he said. "I go to my typewriter at nine o'clock whether I feel like writing or not, or whether I have anything ready in my head to write. I know when I get there it will come; and I can't afford to break the habit."

Mark Twain arrived at the same result by staying in bed in the morning, propped up for writing, and, much to the sorrow of his good wife, smoking at he wrote. "People don't bother me there and interrupt the flow of ideas. If you build up a habit of writing at a certain time, the ideas get a habit of coming then."

In my young days as an assistant editor of *Everybodys Magazine* I discovered a short story in the ruck of unheralded incoming manuscript which made me straighten up and shout of my discovery to my chief at his desk across the room. It was a tale of childhood in a small village, and its humor and sympathetic understanding, and the narrative itself, were so far above average that it won immediate acceptance. When published it brought in so many favorable comments that the magazine republished it in a small brochure.

Of course, we pestered the author for more stories of the same sort and quality, but though she tried again and again nothing worthwhile resulted. She had no flair for writing. But that story had suddenly flowered, out of long forgotten and neglected seeds in her mind, stored there ever since her own small girlhood in a small village. Some unaccustomed mood or experience had suddenly brought it to the surface. She had "had an inspiration."

INSPIRATION then, I take it, is the sudden opening of some trap door into a subliminal area of the mind, or whatever the psychologists choose this year to call it. What opens that door I suspect may be any one of several things—either special pressures from within or demands from without. This I do know, that the experienced artist, the so-called professional, has mastered tricks and devices for getting it open, and so brings his subconscious mind into double harness with the rest of his cranial equipment. All inspired writers from Moses to Millay, all inspired artists, have done no more or no less than that.

I may well bring Moses into this, for it is in connection with those ancient preachers and authors of Holy Writ that the word "inspiration" is most commonly used. Let me condense that romantic and undying legend: the enslaved tribes, downtrodden and crushed into the very slime of ignorance; the slave-mother who casts her babe into the pathway of a princess; its adoption and rearing in the palace, with patrons and teachers who put at its disposal all the wisdom and knowledge of the most civilized nation in that ancient world. Then comes the revolt of the slaves, and the young man throws in his lot with his own people. For forty years he wanders with them, finding them filthy, ignorant, unruly, and steeped in superstition. Through all that time he must have come to feel the task of leadership an utterly hopeless one.

Then, the story tells us, he left them and went up into a high mountain and communed there with Truth itself. When he came down he carried with him a compact body of social rules and regulations which form the basis even today of those codes which make orderly living possible in our human society.

The inspired writing of Moses was a concentration and essence of all that had gone into his young mind in those days of palace teaching forty years before. If to the orthodox I seem to ignore the voice of Deity dictating on that mountain top to a scribe who takes notes with mallet and chisel on tablets of stone, they should realize that the Divine plan is no less evident in the impulsive act of a slave-mother and the whim of a princess.

Mastering the mechanics of any art, gaining craftsmanship by experimenting with its tricks and devices can be a real drudgery, and the more inspired the artist, the more burdensome that business may be. The musician spending half a lifetime in practice at the keyboard; the dancer who spends wearisome hours cracking his heels together in the air; the landscape painter mastering the trick of overlaying a background of white with woodland green, and then gouging vertical lines with his fingernail to make gleaming white birch trunks —each of these may find such labor burdensome.

Once in a hotel bedroom I had endured as long as I could the voice of a singer in an adjacent room doing endless arpeggios in a penetrating tenor. Finally I knocked on the wall, and a voice through the keyhole of the communicating door said, "I'm awfully sorry. I don't enjoy this any better than you do, in fact I hate it. But I've got to do it." It was thus I made the acquaintance of the famous singer I was to hear later that evening.

The literary artist often resents this drudgery of self-training to a point where the resentment becomes an inhibition. His thoughts flash through

(*Continued on page* 44)

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Constants of the Tale

SIEGFRIED MANDEL

considers the career of the distinguished biographer-novelist, ***Lion Feuchtwanger,*** *in the light of his latest work.* ***"'Tis Folly to Be Wise,"*** *a story of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's last days.*

HISTORY happens, but art is calculated. Throwing a bridge from one to the other has been the aim of Lion Feuchtwanger. He is particularly fond of Theodor Lessing's observation that history gives meaning to the meaningless. What might be added is the fact that artful historical biography dramatizes that meaning in terms of the blood-and-flesh strutting of the human menage on a makeshift stage.

Since Plutarch, innumerable hands have toyed with historical biography, but not until our time has it become perfected as an art-form. Lytton Strachey led the way, André Maurois attracted a following with his romantic veneers, Emil Ludwig adapted psychoanalytic methods in exposing the psychical clockwork of his subjects, while Feuchtwanger combined a historian's accuracy with a novelist's polish.

With the 1923 publication of "The Ugly Duchess" in Germany, Feuchtwanger gave notice of his special talents. For in that novel he threaded his way through the labyrinthian plotting and counterplotting of the royal Hapsburgers, Wittelbachers, and Luxemburgers of the fourteenth century. At the center of it all, he placed the Carinthian duchess with a sack-like mouth, a demonic figure propelled by hatred and lust for power. The historic canvas was brilliantly detailed and the people of the novel were alive and intense.

Feuchtwanger did not wait long to prove that he was no one-time performer. Two years later he followed up with "Power," which covered the political arena of the eighteenth-century German and Papal States, focusing on the meteoric career of Karl Alexander and his fabulous financier Suess.

Characteristic of this novel's reception was the accolade of the novelist Arnold Bennett, who commended it to the British public in these terms: "It entertains, it enthrals, and simultaneously it teaches; it enlarges the field of knowledge."

This tribute he continued to merit with period pieces like the Josephus trilogy in the Thirties, which reached into Roman antiquity and focused on the complex figure of the Jewish historian Josephus; "Proud Destiny" (1947) which pictured ambassador Benjamin Franklin forging a strong link between Versailles and Philadelphia during the Revolutionary struggle against England; and "This Is the Hour" (1951) which successfully explored the tempestuous personality of the painter Goya and the Spain of his day.

"'Tis Folly to Be Wise," his latest, is in many respects his most accomplished historical novel. It can stand on its feet either as a novel or a period portrait of the years surrounding the French Revolution. Dominating the scene, at first physically and then spiritually, is the philosopher-novelist-musician Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who set a whole generation on its collective ear with his preachings.

The challenge of approaching a period as complex as late eighteenth-century France and as controversial a figure as Rousseau is apparent to any historian or biographer. Feuchtwanger's treatment is ingenious.

Lion Feuchtwanger—"human menage."

We do not know too much about th very last days of Rousseau, and wha we do know comes from sources tha are biased. This soft spot give Feuchtwanger ample opportunity fo biographical sleuthing and conjectura improvisation. In May 1778 Rousseau accepted the hospitality of Marqui de Ermenonville at his estate a fev miles outside Paris. Two months late he was found by his common-law wif Thérèse bleeding to death from a ugly head wound. A year later still Thérèse was asked to leave Ermenon ville's estate because of "improprie ties" with the stable master, Nicolas

These are among the meager facts Feuchtwanger assumes that Thérèse' relationship with the stable maste extended back a good many year and that it was he who murdered th sixty-six-year-old Rousseau in orde to put his hands on Jean-Jacques' unpublished manuscripts, includin the now-famous "Confessions." Nico las, through his doting female, hope to be able to cash in on the eagernes of publishers for copy from Rousseau' pen.

Be that as it may, the story make for rousing fiction at Feuchtwanger' hands. At Ermenonville, Rousseau' papers attract people like bees to honey-pot. The old Marquis dream that as "angel" to Rousseau he wil be entitled to edit his last writing and achieve glory riding the Master' coattails. Fernand, the Marquis's so who was brought up by and conse quently suffered from the educationa theories of Rousseau, rummage through the manuscript of the "Con fessions," conveniently permitting th reader to see in flashback-revie some highlights of Jean-Jacques' life. And, there is that superbly char acterized old crone Madame Levas seur, reminding one of Chaucer's rau cous Wife of Bath, who converts he son-in-law's fame into coins for he purse.

Tranquilly standing aside from al these hectic scramblings, Thérès placidly and loyally nurses Rousseau as his urethral infirmity requires, an at the same time carries on amorall with the stable master, a villain whor readers will love to hate. In real lif Thérèse was a chambermaid who wa "adopted" by Rousseau in a non-vir gin state which the philosopher tol

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rantly overlooked, fondly regarding ıer as a child of Nature. Neighbors, taking a less philosophic view, alled her wicked, dull, and tattling, ınd deplored her complete control ver Jean-Jacques. Feuchtwanger reıeates Thérèse as a bovine, self-indulgent creature who rolls in the hay vhen her usually languid passions lictate.

Rousseau was too absorbed to notice the true state of his domicile. How intensely self-centered a man e was can be seen by an incident uring his visit to England where he vas lionized. As a guest of Mrs. David Garrick he attended the theatre, vhere his performance caused greater ttention than her famous husband's. Rousseau wildly wept and laughed uring the play without, however, unerstanding a word of the English ınguage. In short, Rousseau was a ving model of the romantic man of eling: "Je ne sais ce que sense"—only know what I feel. It is the mixıre of naiveté and intellectual proındity that prompts Feuchtwanger's ew that "'Tis Folly to Be Wise."

There were two ways in which ean-Jacques was influential. Like the oung couple Fernand and Gilberte the novel, gentle-born lovers all er civilized Europe read to each her with moist eye passages from e "Nouvelle Heloise," a romance enched in sentiment. Also, "Emile" and Rousseau's firm and purposeful tions on education reached far and de.

The other line of influence grew out Rousseau's essays on "Inequality" d the "Social Contract." Martin trou, who rises in the novel from lage obscurity to important office the new Republic, declaims, "Only ople who come from down below ı catch on to that Jean-Jacques." ıat he meant was the Rousseau who veighed against abuses of the landed gime, who provided the catchwords Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—for French Revolution, proclaiming ın good by nature and society's intutions evil.

Feuchtwanger graphically illustes how these ideas, occasionally distorted form, reverberated in the tional Assembly and how they re adapted to meet the needs of day. Although Rousseau died re than a decade before the great ıeaval, the ideas that percolated in mind filtered down to people in walks of life. That is part of the ıorama vigorously displayed by ıchtwanger.

t was a roundabout way that ught Feuchtwanger to the hisical novel. Pursuing academic dies in Berlin and in Munich, where was born in 1884, he obtained a Ph.D with a dissertation on Heine. Fortunately the commercial market cornered his talents and he produced a number of plays that received moderate attention. From 1917 to 1920, as a result of his German army experience and his involvement with political events, came such sharply critical plays as "Prisoners of War," "1918," and "The Dutch Merchant," which ran afoul of censors and later the National Socialists. Pacifistic strands and faithful reflection of the unrealistic attitude of German intellectuals under the young German Republic give the plays a topical interest.

Although he left this period of "mass emotion" behind him and found his medium in the historical novel, he could not remain a mere spectator of contemporary events as he had intended. In 1930 he wrote "Success," a novel which dealt with Munich in the Twenties and laid bare the rise of the Nazis. When the latter came in through the door, Feuchtwanger had to go out by the window. France was his destination.

There in 1936, he received tribute as a fighter-for-the-good from distinguished writers the world over on his fiftieth birthday. But no sooner had he made himself at home than the war broke out and with it an absurd internment by the French in a lackadaisically and unintentionally inhuman camp that he described subjectively in "The Devil in France." (1941).

Since then he has been living in the United States where he wields his pen as prolifically as ever. He has gone through a lot in his lifetime and has an explanation for his survival: "A man of imagination has an advantage over other people in that an actual experience is almost always less intense than his expectation of it."

It is Feuchtwanger's imaginative and skilful imposition of a pattern of ideas and interpretations on historical events that has gained him the audience which will read "'Tis Folly to Be Wise" in seventeen languages all over the globe. [***Julian Messner. 367 pp. $3.95.***]

Of Seas and Islands

By Mary Ballard Duryee

I

UNDERTOW

SHE lies on the deepest, darkest floor of the sea,
Where the color of sea is night,
Who contrived so long a snare and a net for me,
A lure of shells and weeds, elaborately
Knotted and laced with light.

Like a bridal veil of bliss she proffered it,
In a night where no bird flies;
Now caught in the cunning toils of her counterfeit,
Strangled at last in the jewelled web she knit,
On the sea's floor she lies.

II

ISLAND BASTION

Deeper than blood or breath record
Their various felicities,
This land, this sea-girt land is scored
In patterns vertebral and strong
Along the flinty skeleton
Where my tenacious flesh is hung.

I must return once more to stand
On this lost rock, while phosphorous seas
Encroach upon the night-bound land
And wash the shale of chalky bones
Where lovers perished, one by one,
Repudiating bread for stones.

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THE AUTHOR: "All this attention has me flabbergasted," Leon Uris said the other day of the pre-publication rumblings created by "Battle Cry," his first novel. "I've been a working stiff all my life, and what has been happening to me is beginning to read like something out of very bad fiction." Uris is twenty-eight, the father of three, a resident of Marin County, Cal., and an ex-Marine. Uris, it turns out, is not simply a veteran of the Corps, he is a kind of Marine in mufti. "Though I've been out for several years now," he said as he reviewed his four years in uniform—Guadalcanal, Tarawa, malaria, "I still consider myself a Marine and I always will." To join up, Uris at seventeen went AWOL, from home and from high school. "I suppose I began writing 'Battle Cry' the day I joined the Corps," he said. "Many times I made false starts and laid it aside. Then, because of the flops I had after the war—a veteran's newspaper, magazine—I developed a fixation about writing and went out of my way to avoid it. All the time, though, it was doing a slow burn inside me." His slow-burn days were financed by a job he took six years ago with the *San Francisco Call-Bulletin* as a manager of a home-delivery district with thirty-eight newspaperboys. Anyway, one day in 1950, Uris became "aggravated," only the way a Marine can, by the method used to choose the All-American football team, and he dashed off a nasty piece that *Esquire* was happy to publish. It was Uris's first sale; what's more, it catapulted him out of flopdom. He promptly got to work on his novel. He wrote in his free time—the early-morning hours, his days off, between the babies' bottles. "There were those who thought I was crazy," Uris recalled, "others who gave me encouragement. My guiding thought throughout was that the real Marine story had not been told. We were a different breed of men who looked at war in a different way. Marines are positive people." Mrs. Uris, of course, is a Marine, ex-Women Reserves. Her rank: S/Sgt. —a couple rockers more than Mr. Uris, ex-Pfc. —BERNARD KALB.

The Backdrop Is Victory

MERLE MILLER,
a wartime editor of Yank, *discusses the novels that have emerged from World War II, including a particularly fine new one about the Marines,* ***"Battle Cry,"*** *by* ***Leon Uris.***

EVEN while the Second World War was still going on, John Hersey realized that there are good officers and bad ones; there are gentle men like Major Victor Joppolo, and there are bombastic psychopaths like Marvin, the pistol-packing general in "A Bell for Adano" who bore an uncomfortable resemblance to George Patton.

However, as soon as hostilities ended, the novelists found almost nobody either very decent or very competent in the commissioned ranks, at least nobody with the rank of captain or above. "Mister Roberts" was, after all, only a lieutenant, and the higher-ranking brass in most novels seemed to be made up of idiots, misfits, and repressed homosexuals.

One of the significant but often unnoticed differences between most of the successful novels about the Second World War and those concerning the First is that Hemingway and Faulkner, to use the two most illustrious examples, hated war—but not the officers and men who fought it.

Norman Mailer and James Jones and most of the other young men who disguised their experiences in fiction hated war all right, but they also loathed the Army or the Navy or whatever branch of the service about which they wrote.

Then came Herman Wouk's "The Caine Mutiny." Captain Queeg was insane all right, but the other officers had no more faults than the rest of us, and Wouk himself obviously has an enormous admiration for the Navy career officers.

In the light of all this, Leon Uris has done the nearly impossible. He has written a wonderfully different kind of war novel, perhaps because time has mellowed his memories, possibly because he was a member of the U.S. Marine Corps. His "Battle Cry" is nearly as long as the other successful treatments of the Second World War; it has many of the same characters and now traditional Anglo-Saxon words, but Mr. Uris is not angry or bitter or brooding. He obviously loves the Marine Corps, even its officers. Thus, he may have started a whole new and healthy trend in American war literature.

Sam Huxley, Mr. Uris's officer as well as one of his heroes, is the fictional commander of the very real Sixth Regiment of the Second Marine Division, and he would have been an easy man to hate. He is hard, and he is harsh, and he discourages intimacy. After his men have been withdrawn from the lines in Guadalcanal, he immediately orders a seventeen-mile hike back to camp. He demands a painful, costly, and, on the surface unnecessary march in New Zealand. He is unrelenting on Tarawa, and he begs for and gets a costly assignment on Saipan. He is a Marine first and a human being second, and Mr. Uris has made him considerably larger than but also part of life.

Leon Uris knows that Huxley is the kind of man who wins wars, and he recognizes, too, what Hemingway points out in that too-little-known anthology, "Men at War":

"Once we have a war there is only one thing to do. It must be won. For defeat brings worse things than any that can ever happen in war."

Most of Mr. Uris's contemporaries seem to have forgotten or never known that.

"BATTLE CRY" has mainly to do with the men who call themselves "Huxley's Whores," more specifically those in the radio squad. The narrator is Mac, a thirty-year man who tells the story of Danny, a seventeen-year-old high-school football player, of Andy Hookans, a Swedish lumberjack, of Shining Lightower, a Navajo Indian, of Constantin Zvonsk, the original hard-luck boy, of Joe Gomez, the traditional troublemaker, of Marion Hodgkiss, the book-reading, recording-playing intellectual, and the others, including the self-sacrificing Jewish boy who has turned up in every war novel so far.

"Battle Cry" has faults. The women, a simple high school girl, a lovable prostitute, a New Zealand widow, a

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unattractive heiress, are too simple and too foolish. Marion is a caricature, and Gomez is tiresome. What's more, Mr. Uris's book would have been improved by considerable cutting. Almost 200 pages are devoted to the Stateside training. A third or half that many would have been enough.

But, at his best, which is most of the time, Mr. Uris is superb. That glorious and memorable country, New Zealand, comes completely alive, and the combat scenes are terrifyingly real.

Mr. Uris was obviously a good Marine; he's a good novelist, too. He certainly deserves a medal from the Corps and from the National Book Award people, too. **[*G. P. Putnam's Sons. 505 pp.* $3.75.]**

The Hills Behind Appomattox

CONNIE COLEMAN

*reviews a fine new story of a Virginia childhood, **John Bell Clayton's "Wait, Son, October Is Near."***

JOHN BELL CLAYTON'S second novel is a book of great truth and great beauty, as unselfconcious in its splendors as the changing of the seasons.

The story opens in July, when its central character, Tucker English, is ten years old. He will be eleven in October. By the time the story ends, in early September, the reader has come to know and care deeply about Tucker and has seen him through a great crisis.

Tucker lives on a large farm in a beautiful valley in Virginia. His mother is a bending but essentially ungiving woman; he is not as close to her as he is to Father, who taught him love for the land and for his traditions, who "carried his body with pride and . . . stood on the earth with confidence." Tucker roams the farm and the country around it; he watches the field work, quarrels with his older brother Kyle, listens to the stirring Civil War stories of his grandmother and of old Soldier Parrish, for both of whom the truth of the past has been distorted and broadened into myth.

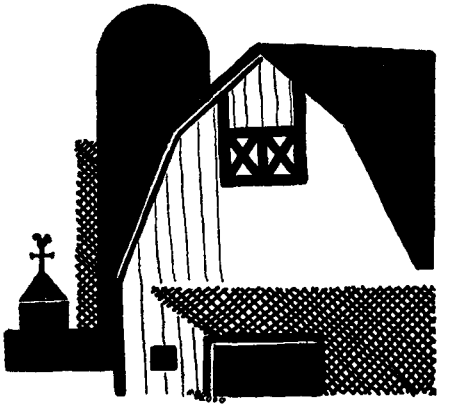
Tucker's companion in discovery is Teaberry, a Negro girl his own age who is paid a penny a day to see that he stays out of trouble. Trouble comes that Tucker didn't use and Teaberry can't help. Father is attracted by the buxom Rosa who lives down the road. Her brother Staples has violence in his past and threatens violence in his future. Suddenly the situation boils up to its climax, and Tucker sees everything he loves in danger of destruction. The action he takes to try to avert this destruction is the incident that holds the book, and a horrifying and desperate one it is.

Mr. Clayton has shown by his stories and his first novel, "Six Angels at My Back," what an exceptionally good writer he is, but his new book excels all that went before it. He is in absolute command of his material; he has in abundance the gifts of a first-rate novelist. His characters are magnificently alive, and so is his locale. The book is full of lovely descriptions, never used self-consciously as "fine writing," but always to expound his story and to give us a richer understanding of his people.

For all its variety of incident, the book wastes no words, includes nothing that is not necessary for the powerful effect of the totality.

Though this is a serious story, it is shot through with humor that is bracing and affectionate. Teaberry is the most enchanting comic creation I know in contemporary fiction. Who, having read it, can forget her aplomb in the scene in which she buys strawberry pop for herself and Tucker? She pays with a thousand-dollar Confederate bill, and when Tucker nervously urges her to leave, she fixes a beady eye on the storekeeper and says, "Ah ain't movin' nowheres till thishere man gives me mah change."

Mr. Clayton should win many admiring and appreciative readers with this one. **[*The Macmillan Co. 255 pp.* $3.50.]**



Haunts of Eagles

CHARLES LEE

*reviews **Ernest K. Gann's "The High and the Mighty,"** a novel with a Grand Hotel set of characters caught in a transoceanic plane disaster.*

TAKE 73,000 pounds of aircraft; fill it with cargo, fuel, and twenty-one SOB's (souls on board); roar it across the North Dog route from Honolulu to San Francisco just beyond the point-of-no-return; then let it develop engine trouble. Just to make things a little more suspensive, suppose the pilot, always thinking a thousand miles beyond the horizon, knows he has two frightening choices: to ditch his plane in the rough seas below (he knows that waves take on the consistency of concrete when they are struck by a speeding plane), or to try for a landing on the California coast (he knows that the weather is foggy, that he has to maintain an altitude further crippling his plane, and that he will have on hand not more than five minutes' worth of fuel while he maneuvers for a safe descent).

Then, just to tighten things up a bit, fill your pilot with fear, give him a has-been co-pilot who cracked up his own family in a crash, add a navigator whose computing dependability vanishes under pressure, and let loose a homicidal maniac in the passenger cabin at exactly the moment that number four engine bursts into flame. There is nothing stingy about Ernest K. Gann's sense of melodrama in his new novel, "The High and the Mighty."

The serious reader, if he hasn't already jet-propelled himself elsewhere, will, of course, find a twenty-second character aboard who lends a somber note to the hectic doings on plane 420: his name is Death. "The High and the Mighty" is, in a sense, a study of men and women on the edge of destruction (aren't they always?), of the thoughts they think as they are about to die, of the answers they're ready with if they could but live.

All of these people are picked with a kind of relentlessly obvious factitiousness; their ironies are leaden; their commingled climaxes have the novelty of a firecracker after a dozen have been discharged; they achieve a quality of antique surprise. Among the passengers are a pair of newlyweds (in a special transport of their own); a scientist having a nervous breakdown; a faded beauty; a Broadway producer and his wife; a financier; a Korean; a brave old man

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dying of multiple myeloma and getting kicks out of the nightmare flight; a spatting New York huckster and his wife; a simple fisherman; and the aforementioned maniac.

The odd thing is, however, that you really don't have to pay much attention to what the SOB's, sometimes whimsically totted up by the author to number twenty, and sometimes twenty-one, are up to. It's the story that contains theirs, the story of the plane in dispute with time, space, and the elements that really matters; and it is thoroughly fascinating. Mr. Gann gets inside his plane as he never gets inside his characters; it turns out to be a thing alive as they turn into machines. Before you leave battered old 420, you'll be familiar with its forward flight deck, with its pink and yellow lights, its quivering instrument panel, and its odor of leather and hydraulic oil; you'll sit on the navigator's comfortless stool and work with his charts and computers.

Mr. Gann's book (a kind of aerial "Grand Hotel") is the current Book-of-the-Month Club selection, but we doubt that any airline executives are going to be turned into subscribers as a result of it. [***William Sloane Assoc.*** **$3.50.**]

Asylum or Jail?

HENRI PEYRE,
professor of French at Yale, reviews a strange and haunting novel from France, ***Pierre Molaine's "Strange Laughter."***

THE laughter which shakes the pages of this volume is weird indeed. It is the bitter, hysterical, yet tender and moving laughter of those who are dead to this world, the inmates of an insane asylum. In the same ward, three or four patients have struck up a friendship. They nurse and console each other, pander to the need of each for deceitful fantasies, blend truth and wild fiction, coarseness and poetry. They are in the house of the dead, yet they cry out their love of life and nurture the faint glimmer of illusion and of hope which keeps them alive.

One of them, a powerful giant, a ravenous yet gentle animal in a man's body, lost his sanity during the war and is obsessed by nightmares of German persecutors: his name is Max. Another one, Coselli, is an intellectual, fond of music and poetry, strangely lucid at times, who persists in imagining he had a son whom he will kiss again some day. He had not, but he had married Jany, a beautiful and delicate woman who, out of devotion to her insane husband, convinced the director of the hospital to accept her as a nurse. Coselli will not even recognize or remember her. But she falls in love with a third inmate, the story's narrator, Hubert Blancfain.

Hubert entered the neuropsychiatric hospital when he was at the end of his tether, after a hunted life and with his reason endangered. But it soon becomes clear that fear is his form of madness and that he has reason to fear. One day he declares his love to the nurse Jany. Their love is passionate, total, until Hubert discovers that Jany is the wife of his friend, pitiful Coselli, and that she now hates her insane husband and would gladly be rid of him through a double dose injection, in order to return to life and happiness.

Hubert, who never was mad but only played up to the world of the insane to conceal his past, is remorseful at having betrayed his friend. He will leave Jany and the asylum from which he can be released, being cured. But Jany clings to him in a fit of desperate jealousy. She had, alone in the hospital, surprised the secret of his murderous past through a stolen letter. She denounces him to the police and herself commits suicide. As he is going to be arrested, Coselli the madman, in a flash of cunning lucidity, helps him escape and escapes with him. They drive into the countryside. Coselli is resigned to the fate which awaits him: the gates of the insane asylum will again hold him captive; Hubert will perhaps reach Spain and freedom.

The tenuous thread which holds the disjointed chapters of this book together is very elusive indeed. The reader is, from the outset, steeped in a lurid atmosphere of madness in which reality and dream, the happenings of the present and the nightmares of the past are confused. The dialogues are now punctuated with madmen's obsessions.

The novel went well in France where, the title "Les Orgues de l'Enfer," it won the Renaudot prize in 1950.

It is not likely to be popular with a wide public in this country. It is overwritten and too full of literary allusions and it demands too much of an effort from the reader: many of its pages must be read at least twice to be unraveled.

Yet the talent of Pierre Molaine is great. With more simplicity and more naturalness, he may well become a eminent French novelist. And for the unhappy few, more and more numer

(*Continued on page* 41)

Your Literary I.Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich

PLETHORA OF PEDAGOGUES

Laura A. Tillett of Charlotte, North Carolina, presents brief descriptions of fictional school-teachers, mainly masculine, and asks you to identfy them, their creators, and the works immortalizing them on a 5-3-2 point basis. A score of sixty is D, seventy C, eighty B, ninety A, and one-hundred AAA. Answers on page 44.

1. The head of an academy for young ladies, she "invariably presented to her scholars on their departure" a copy of Dr. Johnson's dictionary.
2. He was in love with the belle in the settlement of Dutch farmers in which he taught, but was outwitted by his rival and was never seen again in that area after a terrifying experience.
3. Of him it was said: "And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche."
4. During an air raid he continued to give a lesson in Caesar to boys in an English public school.
5. This governess fell in love with the father of her charge, not knowing that he had an insane wife.
6. It was said of this village schoolmaster:
"And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew."
7. In a dugout in the British trenches, this former schoolmaster quoted "Alice in Wonderland" to steady young soldiers.
8. He believed in the "practical mode of teaching," and taught his boys to spell c-l-e-a-n and w-i-n-d-e-r; then he sent them out to wash the windows.
9. He was borne on the shoulders of his former students to a grave "on a tall mountain, citied to the top."
10. He ran his pupil out of his school after the boy lost in an essay contest through lingering too long over the exact word.

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BELLES-LETTRES

Way of the Modern

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH,
professor of dramatic literature at Columbia, *considers two fine new volumes of English essays,* ***George Orwell's "Such, Such Were the Joys"*** *and* ***V. S. Pritchett's "Books in General."***

NOBODY, we are being told these days, can continue to write on the old subjects from the old point of view. But a good many writers do, and write very well besides.

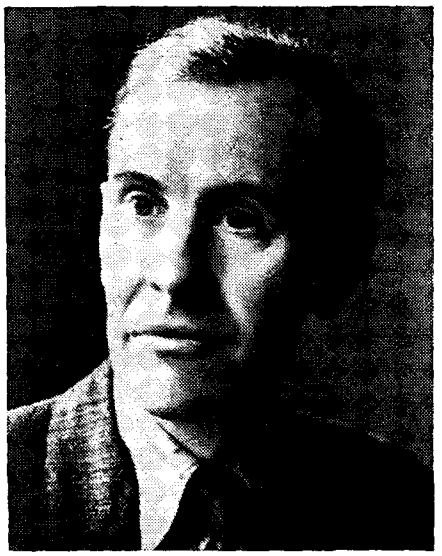
Two new collections—George Orwell's "Such, Such Were the Joys" [***Harcourt, Brace & Co. 230 pp. $3.50***] and V. S. Pritchett's "Books in General," [***Harcourt, Brace & Co. 258 pp. $3.50***]—happen to illustrate the point very completely. But even within the special field of the essay, it could be illustrated as well by a dozen books published within the last few months. Hesketh Pearson writes a new biographical essay on Whistler; Peter Quennell publishes a miscellany of Stracheyesque portraits; R. W. Chapman, having completed thirty years work on the editing of Samuel Johnson's letters, comes along with a discreet volume of "essays and reviews." Whether you call this "business as usual" or "fiddling while Rome burns," it is obvious that *some* readers as well as some writers must still be interested.

"Mere survivors," say the leaders of the other side. But one can never be sure and generalizations are dangerous. "When you are on a sinking ship," says Orwell, "your thoughts will be about sinking ships," but a great many writers give only occasional hints that they are thinking about them at all. A novelist who simply disregards the major public events of the moment is generally a footler or a plain idiot."

But some esteemed novelists seemed to do just that and if history will decide that they were footlers or idiots history has not always made that decision. Jane Austen published Pride and Prejudice" the year before Waterloo.

In any event, it is obvious that Orwell's great merits as a writer are not exclusively responsible for the fact that he has assumed so important a position in current literature. Another reason is simply that he expresses so well the attitude of those writers who are dominated and almost overwhelmed by the sense that they are living in the midst of catastrophe and that doom of one kind or another has already been pronounced upon every society, every organization, and every individual. To him and to them there was a Past and there may just possibly be a Future. But there is no Present, except chaos. Arthur Koestler is, of course, his only rival claimant to the title of spokesman par excellence for the doomed generation, but Orwell has the advantage of a richer culture and a less melodramatic method. He is the heir to a Past even though he refuses to consider it useful, while Koestler seems to have been born yesterday and, as an American reviewer recently pointed out very shrewdly, is unaware that thought existed before Freud, Marx, and Stalin.

No doubt Orwell's knowledge of his own fatal illness conferred upon him a certain macabre advantage. It was fitting that the prophet of the general doom should have a private doom hanging over him. It gave confirmation and a sort of immediacy to his sense of the common situation and perhaps contributed as much as his active participation in the Spanish Civil War to the fact that he was not among those leftists whose writing is, as he puts it in this book, "a kind of playing with fire by people who do not even know that fire is hot" and indulged in chiefly by "the kind of person who is always somewhere else when the trigger is pulled."



V. S. Pritchett—"doom of a kind."

However that may be, even this posthumous volume of hitherto uncollected pieces represents the thinking of a man who never for a moment forgot the sinking ship. Superficially various in subject matter, they are all about the same thing. The title essay, which is a ghastly account of the horrors endured in the supposedly respectable public school he attended as a child, prepares the way by exposing the hidden barbarism of the nineteenth century only waiting to come to the surface. All the rest are concerned directly with a world grown frankly desperate. Moreover, since the individual essays are dated, it is possible to see how the tone darkened. In 1941 he could describe the virtues of English attitudes and conclude that "in whatever shape England emerges from the war, it will be deeply tinged with the characteristics that I have spoken of earlier." By 1948 such qualified optimism must have seemed largely sentimental. Speaking of T. S. Eliot's pessimism, he says that it finally leads Eliot in "Sweeney Agonistes," for instance, to achieve the "difficult feat of making modern life out to be worse than it is." One can only, and rather feebly, hope that Orwell has accomplished the same "difficult feat."

What is most original in his writing is the way in which he attempts to get beyond the mere description and acceptance of catastrophe to concern himself with what may be called an "adjustment" to it, particularly for the writer. With utopian radicalism he was long ago disillusioned. Notoriously he has no faith in panaceas, left, right, or liberal. He sees us as ineluctably in for it. And yet he is not quite willing to admit complete defeat either as a man or as a writer. He wants somehow still to function as both, not to be reduced by circumstance to complete nullity. Granted his premises, it is a difficult undertaking and the problem is really the central concern of this group of essays. Time and time again he returns, not merely to the conviction that the writer must be "engaged" with his times, but also to the insistence that, while being so engaged he must not become a mere propagandist, must not merely put himself at the service of some party, some movement, or some cause.

To some the position may seem an odd one and certainly it lays out a path difficult to follow. Theoretically it seems to mean a sort of divorce between the active man and the con-

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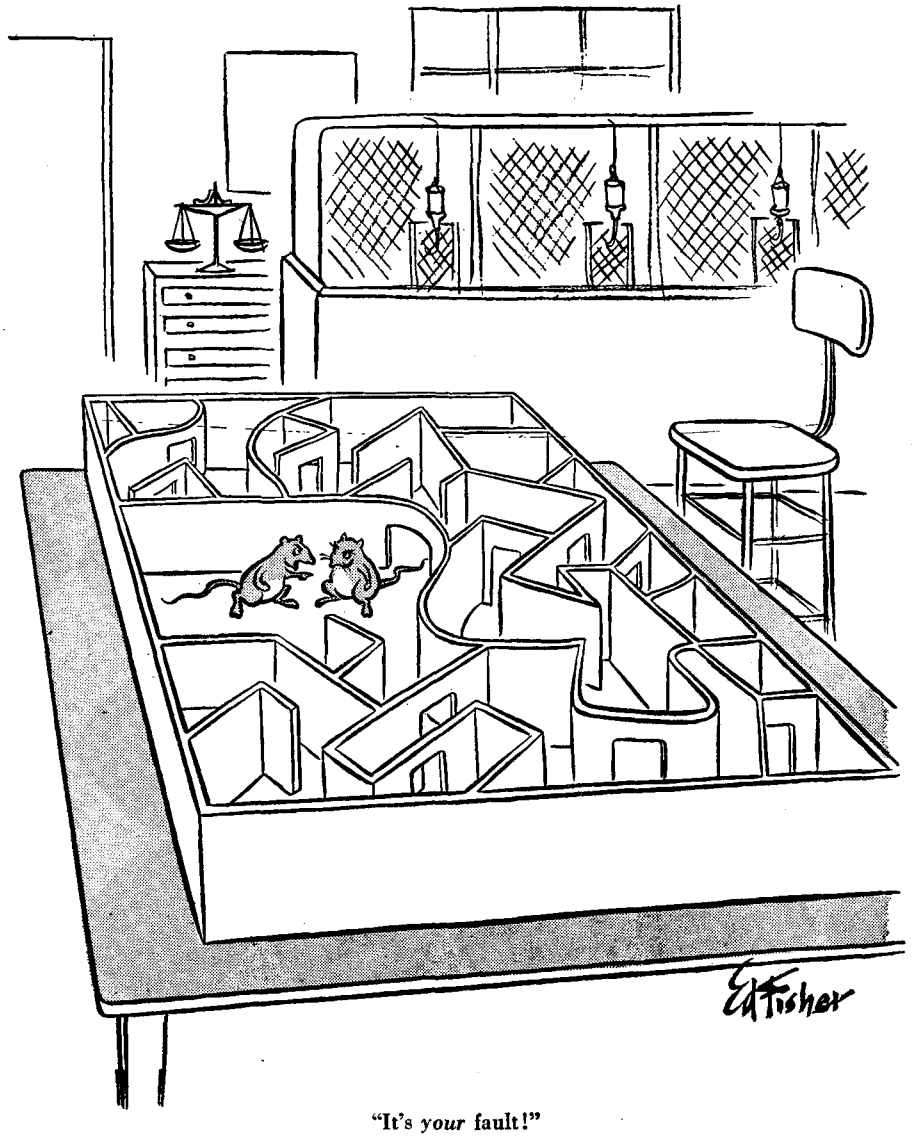
templative. The former votes, works, perhaps fights, for whatever side he has chosen. The contemplative man is aware that there is much to be said against all sides and will not surrender either his integrity or his power of criticism to loyalty. Once Orwell is downright enough to say that the writer "whatever else he does in the service of his party—should never write for it." A little later: "There is no reason why he should not write in the most crudely political way, if he wishes to. Only he should do it as an outsider, at the most as an unwelcome guerrilla on the flank of the regular army. His writings, insofar as they have any value, will always be the product of the saner self which stands aside, records the things that are done and admits their necessity, but refuses to be deceived as to their true nature."

Some readers may still remember the controversy aroused a generation ago by Julien Benda's "The Treason of the Clerks," in which the author inveighed against the intellectual who concerned himself with partisan affairs. Orwell's arguments may be thought of as an attempt to bring the Benda doctrine up to date. In today's world, he says, it is impossible not to take sides. But there nevertheless still is, so he implies, a treason of the clerks which consists, not in being partisan, but in abandoning that determination to see beyond policy, official doctrine, and tactics which is the particular function of "the clerk."

IN HIS case what this means in practice is that, leftist though he is, a large part of his writing consists in exposing the errors, the insincerities, the illogicalities, and the crimes of the leftists. As a matter of fact, there have been few more trenchant or more fundamental criticisms of the whole ideology of the left than are to be found in this very book. Yet in the author himself one recognizes doubts concerning the possibility of living long with the paradox which his attitude involves. The wholly committed will say "You can't be both for and against us." Their opponents will question the right of anyone to say: "Sometimes, if a writer is honest, his writings and his political activities may actually contradict one another. . . . A willingness to *do* certain distasteful but necessary things does not carry with it any obligation to swallow the beliefs that usually go with them." This is as clear a statement as has ever been made of the philosophy of "the fellow traveler." Nearly every intelligent and sensitive man has been tempted at some time to adopt it. But in many, doubts still remain concerning the ultimate consequences of the program. Does it lead necessarily to an acceptance of the principle that the end justifies the means? And is that perhaps the ultimate surrender of integrity? Can one hold the mind aloof if one surrenders everything else?

To turn from Orwell to Pritchett is to turn from the one England to the other. Here are thirty-four literary essays, all but one reprinted from *The New Statesman and Nation,* which is by no means a conservative paper and of which the author is literary editor. Yet nearly all of them deal with writers of some previous age and except for a few passing allusions to recent changes in the social or political scene there is no seeming awareness of "the sinking ship." Mr. Pritchett writes about Cellini, Henry James, and Boswell as though no fundamental reappraisal were necessary, as though we were still living in a culture which, according to Orwell, is dead. Nobody can keep on doing that? But some obviously can.

If up-to-the-minute books often seem at first sight better than they are, traditional books often seem less good. Mr. Pritchett's tone and manner are so usual and familiar that one begins an essay without much expectation. Yet a number of them are extraordinarily perceptive and contain much original thinking where the originality would not be perceived by anyone not more or less familiar with the background of similar writing from fundamentally similar points of view. Mr. Pritchett really does have something to say about Henry James and Samuel Butler as well as about Arthur Koestler. Has he a right to take the time to say it? Is it decent to act, even for the time being, as though the ship were not sinking? Or may acting so contribute even a very little bit to keeping the ship afloat? A reviewer who has himself been sometimes accused of fiddling can only hope so.



"It's *your* fault!"

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Dean of the Smoothies

HOLLIS ALPERT

writes about another English practitioner of the essay form, ***W. Somerset Maugham,*** *and six of his short pieces recently published as* ***"The Vagrant Mood."***

ONE of the signs of the continuing vitality of W. Somerset Maugham and of his work is the fact that he can still excite controversy. It wasn't very many years ago that one of our most noted literary critics published a graceless (and, I think, foolish) attack on him, using as the pretext a novel that was not one of Maugham's best. The critic calmly overlooked "Of Human Bondage," "Cakes and Ale," and "The Moon and Sixpence," as well as half a dozen highly respectable others; he also overlooked fat volumes of short stories, books of essays and autobiography, and gave scant mention to plays that, though written thirty to forty years ago, still are given occasional revivals. With righteous indignation an equally noted playwright rose to defend Maugham soon after. It is difficult even now to strike up a conversation about Maugham without running into violent pros and cons. Maugham is himself aware that something about the way he writes causes irritation in at least a minority of the critics. There is nothing he can do about it, except to continue to write as he always has, and to take comfort in the knowledge that his audience is vast, intelligent, and somehow incessantly curious about him. His recent book of essays, "The Vagrant Mood," will again charm and provoke that audience.

While at first glance it would appear that Maugham picked the subjects of his six essays at random—a reminiscence of a Victorian eccentric, an examination of a minor seventeenth-century Spanish painter, reflections on the novel of detection, an analysis of the style of Edmund Burke, esthetic considerations brought about through a reading of Kant, and recollections of four deceased novelists—it is soon apparent that more than a vagrant mood is at work here, and that Maugham is giving us delectable glimpses of the mature writer's contemplative mind. Wherever Maugham has roamed in imagination he has found the way to return with new insights. An acquired interest in philosophy leads him to Kant, from there to some speculations on the concept of beauty. He has confessed that, to while away the odd hours, he reads endless numbers of detective novels; the time wasn't entirely wasted, for it has resulted in a keen essay on what he considers the decline of the form. I suppose no one has ever found himself in complete agreement with Maugham's critical judgments, and while I do agree with him about the faults of Dorothy Sayers, I fail to find in Raymond Chandler all that Maugham finds in him. Nevertheless, I am always fascinated to learn of Maugham's tastes in any field. I found myself edified by his essay on Zurburan, a Spanish painter in whom, up until now, I have taken not the faintest interest. Maugham's interests have a way of becoming your interests. Long ago he found the secret of being entertaining and interesting, and he hasn't allowed his maturity and his continual advance in stature to give him liberties with his readers.

I don't know of any writer so creatively productive as Maugham who has written so much about writing. From his many introductions to collections of stories and anthologies one could easily make up a bulky volume of essays on the art of writing. It would be a valuable book to have. Maugham, all his life, has had a singular devotion to his craft, and no one has ever made quite so much sense about it. "The Summing Up" has become an essential book for the writer's table. His essay, "After Reading Burke," is a pointed discussion on style. "Burke used the simile somewhat sparingly. Modern writers might well follow his example. For of late a dreadful epidemic has broken out. Similes are clustered on the pages of our young authors as thickly as pimples on a young man's face, and they are as unsightly." Maugham tells us enough in this essay and in others to discover the principles on which he has based his own style—one so seemingly plain and unornamented that some have wondered if it is a style at all, as though sheer readability and style are antithetical. But oddly enough, Maugham is not easy to imitate. The deceptively easy flow, the absence of too-rich metaphor and the clarity have been achieved through discipline and the rigors of craft.

—By Covarrubias, from "A History of Caricature."

Somerset Maugham—"civilized pleasure."

Since Maugham's rewards as a writer have been greater than any now living, the impulse to imitate him must be widespread; pitfalls have always lain in wait for those who have tried.

BEHIND Maugham's conscious craftsmanship is an intriguing personality and an interesting mind. These, as much as any other factors, have gained him his extraordinary audience. Maugham has always been too modest to tell writers who would follow him to get themselves an interesting mind. He has, however, suggested some broadening travel and the willingness to experience as being helpful to the would-be writer. Not that he must eat a whole sheep to be able to tell you what mutton tastes like. "It is enough if he eats a cutlet. But he should do that."

I have rediscovered from "The Vagrant Mood" what I have discovered before, that the enjoyment I get from Maugham is due, in very large part, to the sense of vicarious companionship that he offers me. "Cakes and Ale" remains my favorite Maugham novel because there is so much of Maugham in it. There may be a kind of critical heresy involved in saying this, because I have heard it said, often, that the writer must take himself out of his fiction and I always enjoy the presence of Maugham (thinly disguised as a character) in the stories he tells. That same presence is in these essays. There is a great deal of civilized pleasure to be gained from simply being with the man. [***Doubleday & Co. 250 pp. $3.***]

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Gentleman and Novelist

PAUL M. FULCHER,
professor of English at the University of Wisconsin, reviews ***Reginald Pound's*** *new biography of Arnold Bennett.*

TWENTY years after Arnold Bennett had extricated himself from the grime of the Five Towns, Bernard Shaw, though acclaiming Bennett one of the "young lions," noted that he still "sedulously keeps up an air of being a fouth-rate clerk from the potteries, and out of a job at that." Surely not "sedulously," for Bennett, though never ashamed of his origins, strove hard to become a man of the world rather than "A Man from the North." If he did not quite succeed, he became with Wells and Galsworthy one of the great triumvirate of Edwardian novelists. That label sits comfortably on these three, as it cannot on Conrad or Lawrence. But it is not necessarily a label of derision.

In his new biography, "Arnold Bennett," Reginald Pound is excellent both for what he does and for what he refrains from doing. Bennett's idiosyncrasies are neither minimized nor caricatured. The reader is allowed to make what he will of his taste in dress, his finicky passion for neatness. His fondness for money and for yachts is noted; so is his generosity. His pride in his own prestige is set against his kindness to younger writers. His speech defect, his protruding teeth, his insomnia and the desperate but unavailable remedies for its cure are all here. (Yet his Journal tells us that he could sleep soundly through Shaw's "Heartbreak House" and "Back to Methuselah.") A psychoanalyst might have obliterated Bennett in Freudian bandages; Mr. Pound merely suggests the possibilities. He gives the necessary facts about Bennett's separation from his wife and his later liaison, but he does not speculate or surmise overmuch.

Most available sources—and there are many, including much unpublished material—have been studied to produce an account which in both amplitude and analysis is likely to be definitive.

Plentiful liberal quotations from these sources, especially from Bennett's journal and letters, are harmonized with Mr. Pound's own commentary into a narrative in which the biographer's own style takes on something of the texture of that of Bennett himself—lucid, competent, and unscintillant—it would be false to the tone of his subject for a biographer of Bennett to sparkle. On only a few points could we reasonably want more detail. One of these is Bennett's sudden removal from his post as acting head of the Ministry of Information after the 1918 armistice. Did Bennett have any ground for bitterly accusing John Buchan of being responsible? References to Buchan in the Journal, both long before and considerably after the event, are never hostile and often warmly friendly. A more detailed treatment might also be given of Bennett's interest in the music of Debussy and Ravel, and in the Post-Impressionist painters; his sale of a Modigliani at an enormous profit, as told by Sir Osbert Sitwell, is reminiscent of Soames Forsyte. Much sound criticism is scattered through the biography, although the book is not intended to be a critical evaluation. Yet the stress on Bennett's use of his own background as fictional material, and the indications of how the personality of the man served now to strengthen, now to restrict, and now to vitiate his talent as a creator are in themselves a contribution to criticism.

Bennett obviously absorbed much from the French novelists, but he never quite got under the skin of what it was to be French, just as he never quite got under the skin of the French language, writing "de" Goncourts, "de" Maupassant rather habitually. Much as he was in France, he remained an Englishman on holiday. The "solid panache" with which Sir Osbert Sitwell credits him is a contradiction in terms, yet true. Bennett's petrified plumes are sometimes faintly ridiculous. And the novelists from whom he learned were of a generation at least once removed—Balzac (from whom he also acquired the distressing habit of carrying a gold toothpick), Zola, the Goncourts, Maupassant, even Gaboriau and perhaps the elder Dumas—not his friend Gide nor Anatole France, whose books he read but whom he seems not to have known personally. We learn from the Journal for 1926 that he found in Proust "no landscape, no furniture, no corporate life"—materials of which there was indeed no lack in his own novels. Bennett's determination to outdo Maupassant's "Une Vie" in "The Old Wives' Tale" by doubling the number of lives is familiar. The theory was dubious—two Elizas crossing the ice are not necessarily better than one; but the result was magnificent.

Does Mr. Pound's biography, recalling the position Bennett once held, suggesting his substantial merits though without elaborating on them, and stopping well this side idolatry, point toward an Arnold Bennett revival? Would a new critical study of equal scope and discernment do more?

It seems doubtful. Much of Bennett is gone beyond recall. The self-help manuals are pale beside the many technicolored medicaments now offered as cures for psychosomatic ulcers and neuroses. The short stories have nearly disappeared from anthologies. We are unlikely to find new reasons for praising the novels or for denying what cannot be denied—the frequent "monotony of style . . . slowness and lamentably even flow of his narration," as Gide puts it. And yet "The Old Wives' Tale" and possibly some others remain part of our heritage. Now that a new generation cries havoc after Virginia Woolf, we may well allow some virtue to honest and sturdy substantiality. Both "Mr. Bennett" and "Mrs. Brown" deserve rooms of their own in the house of fiction. ***[Harcourt, Brace & Co. 385 pp. $5.75.]***

Arnold Bennett—"lucid, competent."

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Belles-Lettres Notes

TRENCHANT ESSAYS: England is not such a sad place after all. It can offer once a week in the London *Evening Standard* a column called "Jan's Journal"—by Ronald Duncan—which is a veritable Parthenon among newspaper columns. About a hundred samples are now gathered into a volume as **"The Blue Fox"** (Oxford University Press, $3.50). That is the name of the pub in the Devon village where Jan runs his farm (and vice versa). If his only crop were his weekly journal, it would still be profitable farming. Each of his pieces is a self-contained short essay with a trenchant, frequently humorous point. He often ends them with a coda, as when his heifer swallows a cow-bell: "As I say, you will not have to ring for your dinner; it will ring for you." We can easily sympathize with Jan as farmer and as personality because he stands midway between two neighborly adversaries—the Colonel, who has brought to the venerable countryside some shocking modern farm practices, and Amos, a stubborn old-fashioned zealot. They all battle against each other as well as against their common enemies, which include animal diseases and eccentricities, the weather, plumbing, gardening, Government bureaucracy.

—ROBERT HALSBAND.

BIOGRAPHY BY AN ECONOMIST: The late John Maynard Keynes was an economist, but he could apply his keen mind and writing skill to other subjects as well. We can judge his versatility in his collection of **"Essays in Biography"** (Horizon Press, New York: $3.50), most of which have appeared before. Of all the pieces two brief ones are of such brilliance and interest that they light up the whole volume, which sometimes has too parochial an interest in a school of economic theory. Mr. Keynes's account of the Council of Four who met in Paris in 1919 is a dazzling report: he is like a dramatist who displays his characters in all the turbulent conflict of temperament, passion, and ideology. It is historical writing in the tradition of the great memoirists.

The other piece, a new one in print, is "Newton the Man," based on a talk delivered in Cambridge in 1946. Based on the hitherto censored manuscripts of Newton, it uncovers a new and astonishing side of the orthodox figure of the great rationalist and scientist. Newton, as his private writings show, was a secret believer in a heresy that would have ousted him from his chair at Cambridge; he made a considerable effort to solve the mysteries of Apocalyptic writings; and he was seriously interested, even to the extent of experimentation, in the alchemy of transmutation, philosopher's stone, and elixir of life. A strange paradox in the founder of modern science. As Mr. Keynes concludes, Newton was tempted to believe that "he could reach *all* the secrets of God and Nature by the pure power of mind—Copernicus and Faustus in one."

—R. H.

A RUSKIN SAMPLER: One of the barriers to our reading the great nineteenth-century English prose writers is the bulky mass of their works. As shelf-covering they served a decorative function at least—so many feet of book-backs in such and such a color: but the ranks of volumes too often remained unbroken. John Ruskin, whose lifetime of writing on various subjects lies embalmed in sets of stout volumes, has suffered an undue neglect; and now Peter Quennell has chosen his **"Selected Writings"** (British Book Centre, $3.75) and edited them with a fine, pointed introduction. Both the idea of such a selection and its execution are felicitous, for Ruskin's essays make sense individually, and with enough variety to make the book a seductive introduction.

At the age of four Ruskin stood on his mother's parlor sofa to preach an eleven-word sermon: his text was "People be good." That moral fervor infused all his writings—sometimes to an absurd degree (though Mr. Quennell wisely omits essays that show it). But it gave everything he wrote an urgency and humanity. In general his writings fall into two groups: on art, including painting, architecture, and nature. Then during his last, unhappy years he wrote his autobiographical "Praeterita," one of his finest glowing works, in which his style and sensibility are purged of their excesses. Almost half of the selections chosen by Mr. Quennell are chapters from that book; the other half is divided between art and economics.

—R. H.

CRITICS OF THE BARD: F. E. Halliday is an indefatigable and encyclopedic compiler of Shakespeariana, whose recent "Companion" was not really worth having as one. His newest book, **"Shakespeare and His Critics"** (Robert Bentley Co., Boston, $5) is more solidly companionable both for his comments and his anthology of other critics' writings. He starts with a thorough treatment of the meager facts of Shakespeare's life, then the stage milieu, the styles, characterization, printing problems, and the disintegrators (who claim that he did not write all of his plays) and the Baconians (who claim that Bacon did). With these matters neatly put in their place, Mr. Halliday surveys the field of criticism, and then gives generous extracts from critics, in-

(*Continued on page* 39)

"I got it a little muddy . . . !"

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The Saturday Review

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Optimism

THE man who today declares that he is an optimist runs the risk of being attacked as if he was an enemy of society or greeted with a polite and derisive smile. The obvious fact that the human race has in the last few centuries progressed in spite of wars, revolutions, physical catastrophies, and the attempts of egomaniacs to conquer the world is neglected, though everyone who has studied history must be aware that few of us who are living today could endure the life of the common man during the Middle Ages or in early Victorian England.

It is now popular to believe that within the next ten years civilization will be destroyed by a world war in which atomic bombs are dropped on manufacturing centers and large cities everywhere. The optimist asserts that in his opinion it will not happen. Since no one can foretell the future, his guess is likely to be as accurate as that of the merchant of doom. It takes more courage to be a yea-sayer than a nay-sayer. Actually, it is easier to prove that those menacing and physically unattractive characters who now dominate world Communism must be more terrified than we are of creating a war that would disintegrate whatever unity they have enforced on their vast country and their uneasy satellites and also destroy the industries they have laboriously created. The typical reaction, at least among what are known as intellectuals, is a startled and hostile glance.

One of them, an Englishman, approached in this unconventional manner the other day, said graciously that he had recently extended the period in which we were all to be consumed. It might be as long as twenty years, though he questioned it, before the day of Armageddon, the final battle between the powers of good and evil, though he seemed to be in some doubt on which side America would stand. There was, of course, Senator McCarthy and the still unresolved problem as to which side, America or Russia, was responsible for the Korean war. Optimism, he thought, was dangerous.

Actually, that fateful word is a state of mind rather than a philosophy, though Leibnitz propounded the doctrine that it means the actual world is the best possible of worlds, a theory that few of us would be willing to admit. The view that good must eventually prevail over evil in the universe is equally doubtful to twentieth-century man, who must be aware that in some millions of years the planet Earth will become a blazing nova. It is an uncomfortable thought that good and evil need not be related to the life of man, in spite of the science-fiction writers who have conceived of our migration to more stable heavenly spheres.

Nevertheless, it is true that the man of sanguine disposition, inclined to take bright views of the more immediate future, may with some justice be regarded as dangerous. What would happen to our columnists, popular magazine writers, intellectuals, novelists, the stock market industry, and indeed to our enemies, if people everywhere began to believe that this monstrous conception of the inevitability of a Third World War and the downfall of man was illogical. It is true that it is necessary to arm, to maintain prosperity at home, and to strengthen our allies abroad, for the optimist may be wrong. But is it necessary to continue to remain in a state of self-induced terror, however pleasant may be the thrill of approaching danger and that strange propensity for sadism which seems to be a minor aspect of the human mind?

IT IS possible to conceive that an honest debate between the yea-sayers and the nay-sayers might begin without shaking the pillars of society. If it is logical to believe that the optimist need not be an as yet undiscovered instrument of the Kremlin, or a fool announcing that this is the best possible of all worlds, let us by all means start the debate. It might begin by admitting the grim truth that at the present moment we do not know whether the apparent softening of Soviet policy is another diabolical move to destroy our alliances and weaken our economy, or whether it is motivated by Communist fears of the future.

It is certainly as easy to argue that the danger of world war has receded in the last five years and that Stalin's policies may have been regarded with dismay by his associates as it is to believe that the present situation is merely an intensification of the Cold War and a more immediate threat of total war. As one looks at the malign countenances of Malenkov and Beria, who may or may not be plotting the extermination of each other, it is not difficult to regard them with the utmost apprehension.

Nevertheless, when Greece was on the point of falling and Turkey was in dire danger and the Marshall Plan only a hope and a prayer, any writer who prophesied that in seven years the Western world would be armed and united could not have found an editor to publish his hopeful theories.

Must it be the same today? We know that the satellite nations cannot rebel and that the Russian masses cannot or would not if they could, but we do know that there must be dissatisfaction and misery everywhere under the hammer and sickle that the enslavement and murder of countless people, the constant iteration of obvious lies and distortions must infuriate, or at the least terrify and annoy, millions of helpless people. We also know in our hearts that good rather than evil will in the end prevail, and that Western civilization over half of the world cannot be extinguished. Are we not to be allowed to hope and to argue that we need not remain the slaves to fear? —H. S.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"NEW WORLD DICTIONARY" CONT.

ASIDE FROM ITS INDULGENCE in personalities, S. Stephenson Smith's lengthy attack [*SR* April 18] on my review of "Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language" [*SR* Mar. 21] boils down to three charges. (1) My review "captiously" emphasized "petty minutiae . . . utterly irrelevant to the main purposes of a desk dictionary." (2) My review was blind to the allegedly "modern, imaginative, and skilful lexicography" of the WNWD. (3) My review un-self-reliantly leaned on my faculty colleagues—but *not* presumably on Robert C. Pooley, University of Wisconsin, or on my distinguished department colleagues at Michigan, all of whom (in Mr. Smith's opinion) would condemn my review.

(1) In publishing a trustworthy desk dictionary, clear, responsible editing is indispensable. For a 1953 dictionary to give 1941 population figures, *undated,* for all of Canada's cities is neither clear nor responsible. Nor, for example, are *undated* population statistics for Greater New York—for which WNWD actually gives U.S. census figures for 1930. Likewise, it is irresponsible practice to list seven living Supreme Court justices but to omit Robert H. Jackson and Thomas C. Clark; or to include ex-Governor Lehman but to omit Governor Dewey and Adlai E. Stevenson; or to omit the key political leaders for Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Canada, West Germany, France, Italy, South Africa.

Or again, this heavily advertised dictionary "of the American Language" carries no entry for *Poor Richard, Diedrich Knickerbocker, Leatherstocking, Scarlet Letter, Moby Dick, Walden, Leaves of Grass, Gilded Age, Colonel Sellers, Huck Finn, Uncle Remus, Mr. Dooley, Main Street, American Tragedy, Grapes of Wrath,* etc. Or among many other everyday terms, WNWD omits *whistlestop, deviate (n., Psyc.), sonar, wildlife, Korean War, SHAPE.*

(2) Just how "modern" and "imaginative" is WNWD? Its definitions (see *propaganda, gamut, nice*) pedantically follow Merriam-Webster's outmoded tradition of historical arrangement; and its overemphasis on etymology is nonfunctional and wasteful of space. And as for *ain't*—Mr. Smith's citing of Sir William Craigie on the colloquial prevalence of *ain't* in Scotland is hardly persuasive for American use. But test *ain't* against WNWD's definition of *colloquial*: "Characteristic of conversation and informal writing . . . not substandard."

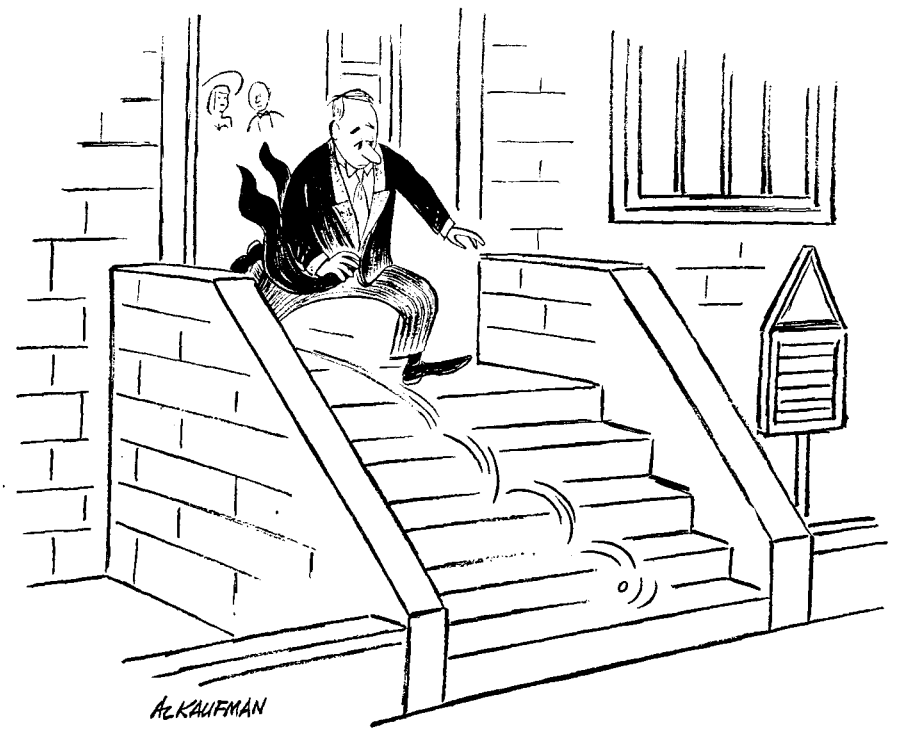
(3) No reviewer, working unaided, can today pass confident judgment on all specialized areas of a desk dictionary—not even S. Stephenson Smith, who adjudged the thick-paper $22.50 WNWD (1951) as "measuring up to modern lexicographical deals . . . encyclopedic material excellently selected"!

In writing my own review I had the cooperation of thirty professor-specialists, from aeronautics to zoology. These comparative reports were cumulatively against the WNWD—in the sciences particularly. Also, the definitions and the illustrations, as in fine arts and music, were less satisfactory and frequently "fuzzy." Only in psychology and semantics did WNWD stand up well.

Finally, a word on Professor Robert C. Pooley, etc. On March 24 he wrote me a letter warmly commending my review of the WNWD. And as for A. H. Marckwardt, chairman of Freshman English at the University of Michigan—he recently named a three-man committee to study this new dictionary, and the gist of that committee's report reads: "WNWD is not as good as at least one other college dictionary, and it is not to be recommended to our students."

CARLTON F. WELLS.

Ann Arbor, Mich.



SOLE HOPE

JUDGING FROM HOMER SMITH'S essay-review of "Two Roads to Truth" [*SR* Feb. 7] I conclude that the thesis presented by Edmund Sinnott is very similar to that of W. T. Stace's "Time and Eternity" [*SR* July 14] and "Religion and the Modern Mind" [*SR* Oct. 11]. This growing school of thought, having rejected the myths of traditional theology, is apparently attempting to reconstruct an absolute foundation for religion and morality by recognizing "intuition" as a valid means of acquiring knowledge.

I agree with Mr. Smith's view that "intuition" is no source of objective truth; it is no more reliable than the traditional appeals to ecclesiastical authority.

In my opinion the only hope of reviving a real concern about religion is in the idea that even apart from its practical consequences there is intrinsic value in the effort to lead a nobler life. . . . Such figures as Jesus and Gandhi give us a glimpse of a higher level of human life, dedicated to a living ideal which is far more than a mere theological creed or absolutist philosophy.

E. W. GRIFFIN.

Erlton, N. J.

MAN'S PLACE IN COSMOS

IN REGARD TO HOMER SMITH'S review of E. W. Sinnott's "Two Roads to Truth" I would like to call attention to the fact that, although man apparently is, as G. G. Simpson writes, "the most highly endowed organization of matter that has yet appeared on earth . . ." it would be rather difficult for some to approve wholeheartedly of the inclusion in this article of the remainder of Simpson's statement, which continues, ". . . and we certainly have no reason to believe that there is any higher in the universe." This would appear to me to be a slightly misleading line of thought to include in a dissertation in which one is concerned with analyzing man's place in the cosmos and arriving at a satisfactory conciliation of science and religion. In view of the extremely limited state of our present-day knowledge, it would seem to be a rather bold step for one to assume that on the basis of what knowledge we have we can conclude "that there is none higher than man."

DAVID B. LYON.

New York, N. Y.

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Seeing Things

THE RISKY BUSINESS OF OPINIONS

"THE cheek of every American must tingle with shame as he reads the silly, flat, and dishwatery utterances of the man who has to be pointed out to intelligent foreigners as the President of the United States." In these words the *Chicago Times* dismissed both Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address.

Other newspapers were no less contemptuous. The *Patriot and Union* of Harrisburg said, "We pass over the silly remarks of the President; for the credit of the nation we are willing that the veil of oblivion shall be dropped over them and that they shall no more be repeated or thought of." The American correspondent of the London *Times* was equally scornful. In his opinion "the ceremony was rendered ludicrous by some of the sallies of that poor President Lincoln. . . . Anything more dull and commonplace it would not be easy to produce."

Most of us who have read Sandburg remember these and other attacks. We also remember that, to their everlasting credit, some papers, such as the *Providence Journal*, the *Springfield Republican*, and the *Detroit Advertiser and Tribune*, recognized at once the quality of Lincoln's words.

Such recognition nowadays seems so inevitable that we are amazed it was not always universal. We read these sneering comments on the Gettysburg address, feeling wonderfully superior. We read them, almost doubting that any people could ever have been so wrong. We read them, forgetting that our opinions may in time (if not now) be no less silly and incredible. Perhaps this is why, without our being aware of it, we find consolation as well as entertainment in the mistaken judgments of the past. Heaven knows, there are plenty of them. On every subject and field of endeavor they are abundant enough to fill anthologies to overflowing.

Our laughter at such mistakes does not mean that we find no satisfaction in coming on opinions or prophecies which, over the years, have proved abidingly right. We do. And when we do, we experience excitement in addition to pleasures. We also are comforted by topical estimates which survive the changing climate of the changing years. We live too close to the probability of our own blunders not to need that other kind of consolation which comes from being reassured that all judgments and prophecies are not false.

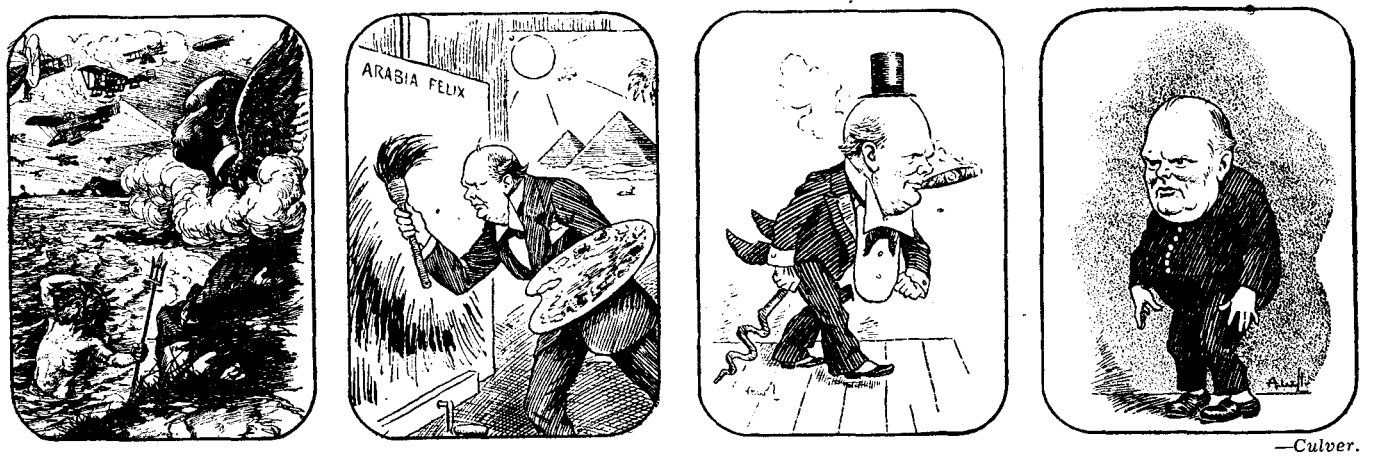
Recently I have been reading, often with incredulity but always with absorption, an estimate of Winston Churchill published in 1920. To those interested in the risky business of opinion and prophecy this study of Churchill offers the double consolation of being both right and wrong. Some of its judgments, though they may have been accurate when written, at present seem very strange indeed. Others, in the light of what has happened to the world and to Churchill, verge on the unbelievable. Yet the most questionable of them wins forgiveness because of one point that is made with extraordinary accuracy.

There was a season when everybody was reading the book in which this Churchill portrait appeared. Its name, you see, was "The Mirrors of Downing Street." Its author, identified on the title page only as "A Gentleman with a Duster," was Harold Begbie. And so great was its success on both sides of the Atlantic that in this country Clinton W. Gilbert soon turned out anonymously an American counterpart called "The Mirrors of Washington," which was also very popular.

Both volumes make good reading today because of their hits no less than their misses. Both were the products of a period when Lytton Strachey's acid influence on the writing of biography was strong. Both went in for the then growing fad of debunking, though with civilized reservations. Both had amusing, sharp, and sometimes annihilating things to say; the one about such figures as Balfour, Asquith, or Lord Kitchener; the other about Harding, Wilson, Hoover, or Baruch.

But to get back to Mr. Begbie's estimate of Churchill. Churchill's political fortunes were far from being at their highest in 1920. His enemies were always taunting him unjustly with the two words Antwerp and Gallipoli. Though, according to Mr. Begbie, nothing could be further from the truth, people had got it into their heads that he was "a noisy, shameless, truculent, and pushing person."

Mr. Begbie, therefore, thought Churchill "one of the most pathetic and misunderstood figures in public life." Please, please note "pathetic." Of all the words in the largest dictionary to apply to Winston Churchill this today seems the oddest. Nonetheless, the "Gentleman with a Duster" felt that, "with the fading exception of Mr. Lloyd George," Churchill was "easily the most interesting figure" then in the House of Commons. There still clung to his



—*Culver.*

The middle chapters of the Churchill legend: 1914, as First Lord; 1921, as Colonial Secretary; 1925, the Exchequer; 1933, the prophet.

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career "that element of great promise and unlimited uncertainty which from his first entrance into politics" had interested both the public and the House.

Churchill's courage was unquestioned. He was already famous as a fighter. No man was "more difficult to shout down" and no man responded "more gratefully to opposition of the fiercer kind." His faults, however, struck Mr. Begbie as being as conspicuous as his virtues. Churchill was "a man of truly brilliant gifts" who could not be depended upon. He carried "great guns but his navigation" was uncertain. Indeed, although Churchill had "many of the qualities of real greatness," unhappily for himself, and perhaps for the nation, he lacked "the unifying spirit of *character* which alone can master the discrepant or even antagonistic elements in a single mind, giving them not merely force, which is something, but direction, which is much more."

The main trouble with the Churchill of those days, in Mr. Begbie's opinion, was that from his youth up Churchill had "loved with all his heart, with all his mind, with all his soul, and with all his strength, three things—war, politics, and himself." He loved war for its dangers, politics for the same reason, and himself for the knowledge that his mind was dangerous, "dangerous to his enemies, dangerous to his friends, dangerous to himself."

KNOWING him as we do as the spokesman for all that was dauntless in a threatened England, and having been fed in the darkest hours when hope was sickest on the plasma of his eloquence and example, we find it almost impossible to believe there was ever a time when anyone could say of Churchill, "His effect on men is one of interest and curiosity, not of admiration and loyalty. His power is the power of gifts, not character. Men watch him, but do not follow him. He beguiles the reason, but never warms the emotions. You may see in him the wonderful and lightning movements of the brain, but never the beating of a steadfast heart. He has almost every gift of statesmanship, and yet, lacking the central force of the mind which gives strength and power to character, these gifts are for ever at the sport of circumstance. . . . He knows the world . . . well enough, what he does not know are the heights. His character suffers . . . from association with second-rate people. He is too heedless of his good name."

Remembering Churchill's inspiring and heroic labors as Prime Minister during World War II, we find it no less difficult to believe that Mr. Begbie could say of him in 1920, "Ministers speak of him in their confidences with a certain amount of affection, but never with real respect. . . . Even those who do not fear him, or on the whole rather like him, will never tell you that he is a man to whom they turn in their difficulties, or a man to whom the whole Cabinet looks for inspiration."

Certainly, none of us for these many years past have thought of Churchill as a frail man. He may have had his bouts with pneumonia, but no one has puffed and sipped his way through a more active, colorful, or contributive life. In 1920, however, Mr. Begbie was worried about him. Wrote he, "His health has been against him: his heart and his lungs have not given him the support he needs for his adventurous and stormy career. . . . I am quite certain he is a delicate and a suffering man."

Hindsight can make wise men of fools. It is easy enough to smile at Mr. Begbie's opinions which time has proved wrong, no matter how true they may have been in 1920. Yet no one can question Mr. Bebie's prophetic correctness when he wrote that all Churchill "needs is the direction in his life of a great idea. He is a Saul on the way to Damascus. Let him swing clean away from that road of destruction and he might well become Paul on his way to immortality. This is to say, that to be saved from himself Mr. Churchill must be carried away by enthusiasm for some great ideal, an ideal so much greater than his own place in politics that he is willing to face death for its triumph, even the many deaths of political life.

"At present he is but playing with politics. Even in his most earnest moments he is only 'in politics' as a man is 'in business.' But politics for Mr. Churchill, if they are to make him, if they are to fulfill his promise, must be a religion. They must have nothing to do with Mr. Churchill. They must have everything to do with the salvation of mankind."

Mr. Begbie died in 1929 and, therefore, never realized how right he was when he predicted how superbly Churchill could serve both his country and the world by losing himself in a great ideal.

—JOHN MASON BROWN.

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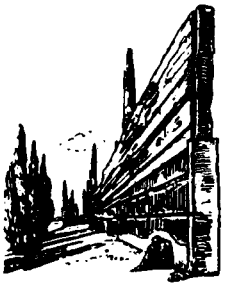

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Broadway Postscript

BROADWAY OR BUST?

INTIMATIONS of summer came early this year with a stock revival of that hardy straw-hat perennial, "Room Service." In the less charitable atmosphere of Broadway, John Murray's and Allen Boretz's 1937 farce concerning the unscrupulous efforts of a shoestring producer to raise money for a theatrical venture now seems embarrassingly synthetic. Only in the play's later stages, when some of the more timeless comic situations occur, does the audience laugh without self-consciousness.

Everett Sloane, using a fork like a high-speed sewing-machine needle; Alexander Asro's ecstatic howling of the magic word "Hollywood" when the producer tempts him to steal a meal in return for an audition; and Ralph Dunn's smug gloating over the backer who has been mulcted, not realizing that he himself is the victim; these are all just as good theatre as they ever were. But the rest of the proceedings as directed by Mortimer Offner are oftener mortifying than anything else. The actors play so rapidly and with such monotonous loudness that their only motive for behaving as they do seems to be that they have been so instructed.

Frederick Fox's hotel room is the most neutral scenery of the season, which is perhaps the tip-off to the whole production. Apparently this revival of "Room Service" is a low-priced experiment to discover whether what is acceptable to straw-hat audiences is not perhaps good enough for Broadway. In this case, my opinion is that it is not.

ALSO not good enough for Broadway, but for different reasons, is the Touring Players' production of three one-act plays at Greenwich Village's new Theatre De Lys. Prefaced by an effective prologue taken from Stephen Vincent Benét's "Western Star," the trio of plays has been adapted by Ellen Violett from Benét's "O'Halloran's Luck," Gertrude Stein's "Brewsie and Willie," and Mark Lodge's "The Zoo." Since all of the plays are concerned with the rootlessness of American existence, the evening has been titled "Which Way Is Home?"

The first play, taken from "O'Halloran's Luck," is a kind of "Finian's Rainbow" minus the music and the dancing, and it turns out to be pale comic entertainment. But Miss Stein's "Brewsie and Willie," which is less cryptic than most of her works, has inspired an intense yet thoughtful sequence reminiscent of Saroyan's "The Time of Your Life." In it the American expatriate shows a more profound understanding of her countrymen than is to be found in most plays turned out by our stay-at-home playwrights. "We must learn to express complication," says Brewsie at one point. And it is indeed this agonized search for a deeper understanding of our young country's personal identity that makes the Touring company's performance moving in spite of the script's dramatic deficiencies.

The final playlet is a nightmarish fantasy in which four city-dwellers find themselves in cages at the zoo, recognized by passersby not as people, but as the animals whose names are on the cages. Again the denouement is less a period than it is a question mark, but, as produced with scenery and lighting by Richard Merrell and Charles Levy respectively, it is exciting and unusual theatre.

The company, which has in its repertoire a variety of well-established plays, operates all over the country with the nominal blessing of National ANTA. This New York appearance, however, was made possible through a loan extended by ANTA's New York chapter, and is an earnest of the local unit's intention to do something practical about stimulating theatre activity. Although the selection of material was unfortunate in that "Which Way Is Home?" has practically no appeal to an entertainment-minded audience and is at the same time something less than great art (the imposing of a $3.60 top was particularly ill considered), the Touring Company is a living example of the uniform excellence that can be achieved by a group of willing young actors who work together as a permanent repertory company. Let us hope that the New York Chapter of ANTA will continue to give practical support to projects of this nature.

—HENRY HEWES.

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SR Goes to the Movies

M-G-M'S CHARLES SCHNEE—LONDON DELINQUENTS—3-D AGAIN

JUST about a year ago Charles Schnee, one of Dore Schary's most trusted screen writers at M-G-M, was selected to organize a new production unit that was supposed to put to work some of the younger producers, directors, writers, players, and technicians hanging around the studio. Schnee, a young man himself, recently won himself an Oscar for his "The Bad and the Beautiful" screenplay, and he takes direct issue with anyone who claims Hollywood doesn't offer opportunity to its young talent. In fact, he took such issue with some recent statements of my own, or rather a collection of statements I had garnered from workers in the film industry. Well, Mr. Schnee certainly is in a position to know what he is talking about, since his new job makes him practically a grand panjandrum of young talent, particularly at M-G-M. Young men heading West are hereby advised to make their first stop at Culver City, California, where Metro's studios are located. Pictures by Schnee's production unit, once called (perhaps humorously) "Sons of the Pioneers" are now beginning to roll into release. One of them, "Jeopardy," exhibited some interesting directorial work by a youth called John Sturges, and another, "Bright Road," represents an interesting Hollywood departure. All the members of its cast, with one exception, are Negroes. Perhaps more important, its subject does not deal, at leastly overtly, with racial prejudice.

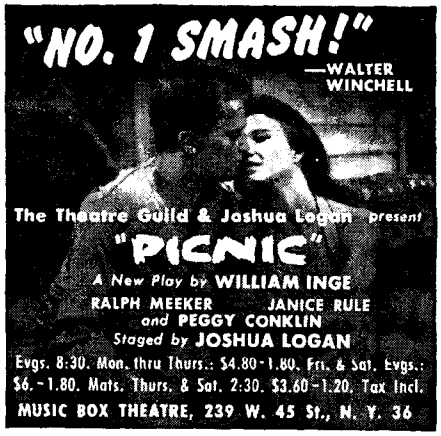
"Bright Road" was made from a *Ladies Home Journal* story called "See How They Run," one of those "sincere, heart-warming" stories that slick women's magazines specialize in and that gained its author, Mary Elizabeth Vroman, a Christopher Award. Truth to tell, it is basically a syrupy piece that manages to beg a good many questions. Yet, M-G-M, in buying it, exhibited a sound impulse. First of all, there is some question as to whether the sensationalizing of racial problems in motion pictures has any truly constructive purpose. Secondly, Negroes are all too often shown as stereotypes rather than as human beings. "Bright Road" is an attempt to head in another and, I think, better direction. The problem here is that of a backward child, who incidentally happens to be a Negro. He is shown as part of a reasonably decent Southern environment, and the story involves the efforts of a sensitive Negro teacher to bring him to an interest in learning and to make him a part of his child community. Dorothy Dandridge, a beautiful young woman, known heretofore more for her night-club singing than for her acting, does well as the teacher, and the child, Philip Hepburn, is first rate. Harry Belafonte, a well-known ballad singer, plays the principal of the school and seemed somewhat stiff in his acting.

Emmet Lavery, the screen-writer, and Gerald Mayer, a new director, have managed to keep the story from extending too far over the line into pure sentimentality, but by so narrowly focusing the range on the "do-good" and by seeing so little evil there is an occasional air of unreality. I remember a documentary called "The Quiet One" that had a similar theme, but that managed to be continually real and affecting. Next to it, "Bright Road" seems something of a fable. Nevertheless, M-G-M is owing a good deal of praise for having made it.

* * *

An Ealing Studios release, "I Believe in You," has a theme related to that of "Bright Road." The child in "Bright Road" is saved, so to speak, by the belief in him and the concern of his teacher. "I Believe in You" has to do with the effect of the probation officers attached to the London police courts on the delinquent young people put in their charges. The English picture is easily the superior, for while its emphasis, too, is on the constructive approach to human problems, it manages to provide a continual air of reality. There is no ducking of the perverse elements in human nature, or the blighting effect of an unfavorable environment.

"I Believe in You" offers not only a keen glimpse of the British probationary system, but has in it some fine characterizations by Cecil Parker and Celia Johnson (the all too seldom seen heroine of "Brief Encounter"). Mr. Parker plays a retired officer of the Colonial Service who, to keep himself active, becomes a probation officer. He has a good deal to learn about the wicked, the underprivileged, and the mental defectives who make up his cases, and his stumblings about and his slow growth of understanding are both funny and poignant to watch. Celia Johnson's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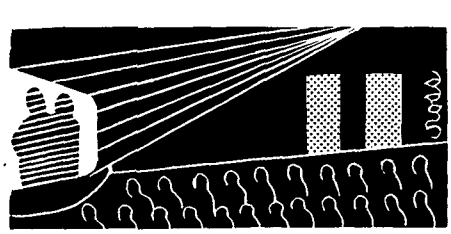
cases are the girls. While looking after her own charges she keeps a watchful and motherly eye on Parker. The story winds itself up in a rather rigged fashion, dipping into a bit of old-fashioned sentiment, but for most of the time it is a wholly absorbing study of some sympathetic and tired people battling to cope with problems almost impervious to control. Godfrey Tearle, as a wise and acid justice, has a splendid minor role, and the delinquents, played by a group of capable young British actors, are practically a catalogue of the types parading through the London courts.

* * *

The second feature-length 3-D movie, and the first to be done in sepia photography, is Columbia's "Man in the Dark." Since it is *SR*'s policy to keep its readers informed on 3-D developments I will report that the photography in this one is somewhat superior to that in "Bwana Devil," that one gets a distinct impression of depth, that you can now clearly see the mole underneath the chin of Audrey Totter, and that the actors still have an unaccountable way of seeming to be miniatures of themselves. The story of "Man in the Dark" is a preposterous one about a criminal who has a lobotomy performed on him and who has, as a result, had erased from his memory the whereabouts of a large sum of money he had stashed away. He retrieves it eventually, in time, like the basically good soul that he is, to hand it over to the insurance company. I am beginning to gain the impression that 3-D plots are not constructed for any sort of versimilitude to life but for the opportunity for the camera technicians to toss all sorts of objects directly at the audience. Thus, in this one, a cigar is pushed in one's eye, a spider swings at you, forceps threaten your frontal lobe, and bullets are fired at you in profusion. Amusement parks offer a splendid opportunity for the little boys playing with 3-D, and here we get a ride on the whip as well as a prolonged one on the roller coaster. Life, I can see, is not going to be easy for the movie reviewer for the next year or two, not until our playfellows on the West Coast get some of the prankish fun out of their systems.

—Hollis Alpert.



TV and Radio

HE WHO LAUGHS, LASTS

THERE used to be a trite and true adage among the radio producers of comedy shows in the old days of that happy medium that went something like this:

"If audience listening to radio at home hears laughter coming from audience listening to show in radio studio, laughter becomes contagious, and audience listening at home will laugh along with audience listening in studio."

For some years this worked beautifully.

Then suddenly after laughing contagiously the audience at home began to wonder what they were laughing about, and it came to pass that some of the most popular comedy stars in radio wound up their careers in a gale of studio laughter and ignominiously disappeared, even before television arrived.

The stars were not to blame. To the producers, the sponsors, the networks, the advertising agencies there was only one yardstick of success. If the studio audience laughed, the show was a hit. And the bigger the laughs the bigger the hit. The comedians began going for the big laughs at the expense of characters, logic, and taste, and finally resorted to sight stuff, known as fun in the studio, all of which found their audiences listening at home baffled and defeated and going to the movies.

With the advent of television, the producers, the sponsors, the networks, and the advertising agencies having profited by their experience in radio, the trite and true adage has been revised to go something like this:

"If audience watching television at home hears laughter coming from audience watching in television studio, laughter becomes contagious, and audience watching at home will laugh along with audience watching in studio."

The only change past experience has brought is in the verb. And whereas the expert comedians in radio had to apply all their know-how to get laughs from their studio audiences, television, by filming many of its comedy shows, has made it so easy. It doesn't matter now if the studio audience laughs at all. The laughs are supplied gratis mechanically by a sound track on the film. And for almost a solid thirty minutes there is a torturing accompaniment of insipid laughter rumbling in the background on many of television's new comedy shows.

This mechanical device of laughs on sound track is known as canned laughter. An audience's laughs have been recorded and are spliced into the thirty-minute comedy film wherever the director or the producer imagines the joke or situation warrants a laugh. Canned laughter comes in all sizes, and the director has to be a pretty big man who can resist splicing in a roar of glee where only a chuckle at most would suffice.

Consequently there are bewildering moments in almost every filmed comedy show where a burst of hilarity leaves the viewer wondering if something funny is seeping over on his set from another channel. There are moments when the comedian calmly goes to answer the door and there is a shout of unrestrained laughter as he crosses the room; a few laughs left in the can, and the producer didn't want to see them go to waste.

And it's not only the incessant sound of the bothersome giggling which is upsetting, but the fear that show business will lose some of its most proficient experts in the art of timing laughs if canned laughter becomes more prevalent as filmed shows replace live performances on television. It's sad and alarming, for instance, when George Burns, possibly one of the most expert timers in show business, a man who can turn a laugh on, turn it off, build it up, let it fade, milk it, stop it, talks right through a laugh which has been mechanically dubbed into the film of the smart little Burns and Allen show. Joan Davis, another clever timer of laughs, is also a victim of she-shall-have-laughs-wherever-she-goes. And the undeniable ability of Robert Cummings is also hampered by a steady stream of canned laughter.

I find a little comfort in a program like "Mr. Peepers," where those connected with the show don't mind whether the audience in the studio laughs or not. They're busy building three dimensional characters which will withstand the ravages of weekly appearances on television.

I doubt that this learned treatise on the overrated necessity of hearing studio laughs will have any revolutionary effect on the general trend in that direction. I have a feeling the laughs will continue to be canned. I also have a feeling that before long the shows will be. —Goodman Ace.

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Music to My Ears

ROBERT SHAW & CHORAL NOVELTIES—RETURN OF MITROPOULOS

LUKAS FOSS is a composer whose aspirations are always worthy of respect, if his abilities to realize them are as yet not fully formed. For that matter, there are few composers at all one can think of who could provide a convincing parallel for the Rainer Maria Rilke text which he has set with narrator, chorus, tenor soloist, and orchestra under the title "A Parable of Death," heard for the first time in New York from the Robert Shaw Chorale in Town Hall.

There is, intermittently, beauty of a sort in Foss's writing, but much of it seemed to me striving for an atmosphere which he never attained. It takes a considerable compositional skill to work back and forth from the spoken voice to the chorus to the orchestra (sometimes used as background for the narrator) to a tenor soloist without losing the thread or spinning it mighty thin. That kind of skill Foss does not yet command, nor the emotional force to make a convincing experience without it.

I add my feeling, for what it is worth, that the spoken voice (in this instance Vera Zorina's) has become a kind of cliché which no longer has the influence of novelty. Her delivery, too, struck me as stylized and a little mannered for the project in hand, with gestures that were suitable of themselves, but not in the surroundings. Walter Carringer was the able tenor, and the musical preparation was well-supervised by Shaw. The program also included six sonnets of Jean Cassou imaginatively set by Darius Milhaud, the "Mass in G" of Schubert, and Bach's "Komm, Jesu, Komm."

* * *

For his resumption of work with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra after collapse and convalescence, Dmitri Mitropoulos brought with him a liberal sampling of the less-than-usual kind of music he favors which has led to its description as the "sub-standard" repertory. However, before he could get down to business with Vaughan Williams (Fourth Symphony) and Prokofiev (Fifth Symphony) in Carnegie Hall, Mitropoulos had to accept an unusually warm welcome-home demonstration from the audience and his co-workers.

Of decided interest was the performance with Eleanor Steber of Berlioz's "Nuits d'Été," a cycle of six songs not previously given in New York. This somewhat bizarre fact has to do with the range of two songs, more suitable for mezzo than soprano: however, Berlioz himself made transpositions for use with piano, and it was this liberty Miss Steber invoked in coordinating the whole cycle for her vocal range. Hers is not the shimmery, magical sound desirable for "Sur les Lagunes," and her French is hardly savorous enough for the contributory effect the text should provide; but in all matters, relating to intelligent musicianship and honest purpose, this was worthy work. Indeed, the whole palette of sound was rather pale, for the Mitropoulos taste in tonal effects is decidedly spare.

How sound an acquisition the Philharmonic made when it engaged Laszlo Varga as first cellist was demonstrated at a more recent concert in his performance of the "Concerto in A" that Gaspar Cassado made from the Schubert sonata for piano and arpeggione (an outmoded instrument which challenged the performer to operate on six strings, rather than the conventional four of the cello). This is ambulatory rather than winged Schubert, but altogether pleasant if properly evaluated. Varga's fine sound was mated to a musical instinct of the first order, possessed of just the degree of sentiment to suit Schubert's mood. Since Varga's background includes several years as a member of a quartet with Jeno Lener, he has served an apprenticeship in cooperation which made a real ensemble of this undertaking.

Along with an orderly if rather dry playing of Haydn's "Military" Symphony, Mitropoulos offered on this same program a hearing of Scriabin's "Prometheus: The Poem of Fire" which was probably the first since some Stokowskian occasion of the Twenties. Purely as a musical expression, without regard for the theosophical concepts it embodies, the verdict had to be that Scriabin was lacking in the formal resource to sustain a work of this length. The harmonic formulae no longer puzzle, and the esthetic impulse they contain are better suited to the limitations of the keyboard than the resources of the orchestra.

* * *

I liked the lyric impulse at work in Arthur Berger's "Ideas of Order," which had its first performances by the Philharmonic of a recent week-end, but not the all-out endorsement of late Stravinskyan sparseness as the desirable kind of orchestral writing. This, it seems to me, is a discipline one can come to after elimination of other elements from tonal expression, but, definitely, a limiting point at which to start. The score might very well make a good mate for a ballet; of itself, I found it too ascetic in use of the orchestra, rather disjointed in rhythmic continuity.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

Blue Heron

By Katharine Day Little

WHEN I awoke and I saw the green dancing
Of maples that flickered, of beeches that flirted
With prancing arpeggios of sunbeams, I said then
Aloud to myself:—Will the larches be lonely?
Will the flagellant waters, withdrawing, remember
The days carved of bronze and the nights wrought of silver?
I said: Will the stiff little pine-trees recall them
That dip their prim feet in the Northernmost inlets
Where secret, recessive presides the blue heron?
Ironic he reigns on the sad-coloured sand-bars;
Low-tide carves a pattern of intricate channels
That's dazzled to living flamingo by sunset.
Then ceases the debonair gossip with hemlocks
That crowd to the edge of the rocks to miss nothing,
Aloofness regains him, and drooping one claw down
He ponders—I saw and I smelt the ineffable
Smell of the sea-things, I asked again, Will they,
The length of a wave's breaking, pause and remember?

And still past my window the flickering freakish
Wild leaf-pattern flowed and the green dance spun faster.

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Home of the Divas

VINCENT SHEEAN,
the journalist, is an avid frequenter of the Metropolitan Opera. Here he reviews ***Irving Kolodin's "The Story of the Metropolitan Opera."***

THE Metropolitan Opera House, on its seventieth birthday, is presented with a monumental tribute in the form of this book by Mr. Kolodin. It is monumental, not sentimental, for seldom have the facts of the case been so candidly presented even in part, going considerably beyond what the author provided in an earlier book on the same subject.

Mr. Kolodin's skill, authority, and deep interpenetrating love of music are well known to readers of these pages. What may not be known is the capacity he shows here for the study of evidence and the courage with which he presents his conclusions. He has examined the books of the opera company for many years back—all the available records—and the story he has to tell is not pretty. The Metropolitan was built originally because a Mrs. Vanderbilt was unable to obtain a box at the older Academy of Music, where the "Knickerbocker aristocracy" had its areopagus.

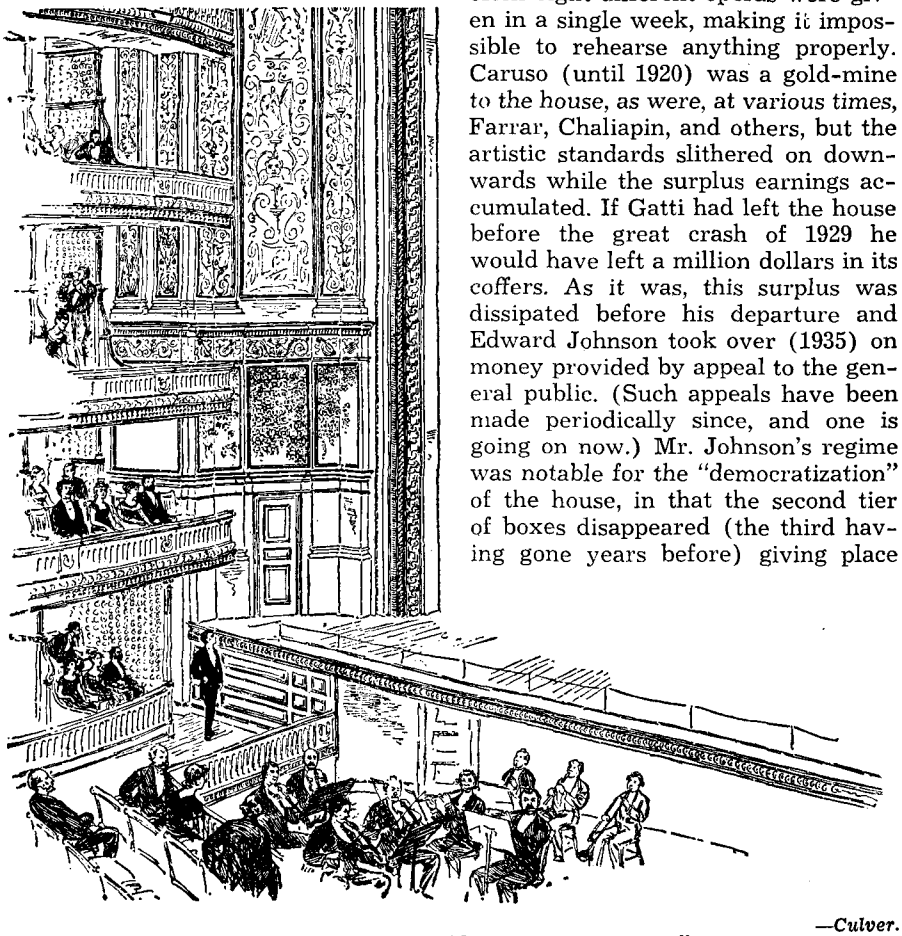
The opera house was built largely for purposes of social display, with little regard for musical values and no consideration for either the stage or the ordinary public. There were originally three tiers of boxes, and the architecture started with them. The original owners, of whom the Vanderbilt, Morgan, and Astor clans were a majority, had their boxes in fee simple, as they had their houses, and all they had to pay was the ordinary maintenance charge for taxes, repairs, etc. An illiterate mercantile and banking plutocracy, with no taste, manners, or tradition, created our national opera house as an expression of their own vulgarity. They constituted the Metropolitan Opera and Real Estate Company, which owned the property from 1883 until the Opera Association (the producing unit) bought it, after fierce wrangles, in 1940.

At that time the owners received back nearly as much as they had originally put in, after almost sixty years of profitable occupancy. A good many of them in more recent decades made money by renting out their boxes to others, since few or none of these ladies and gentlemen cared to go to six performances a week.

In other words, the "backers"—those famous "backers" we used to hear about—backed nothing, and the "guarantors" guaranteed nothing. Whenever the opera got into real financial difficulties, appeals were made to old John Public to fork over, which he invariably did.

But the point of the financial story is that through most of its seventy years the opera actually did make money, although its managers seldom admitted it. Grau made money; Conried made money; Gatti-Casazza made money for twenty years, until the Great Depression hit him. They all made money at the expense of artistic values, although no two were alike in method. In the days of Grau and even Conried the "star system" was rampant. Nobody cared what kind of orchestra, chorus, or stage settings were on hand so long as principal roles were sung by the De Reszke brothers, Melba, Nordica, and the like. Grau used to say that "nobody would pay a nickel to look at a man's back," and consequently his conductors were mostly poorly paid hacks with no authority over the performances. "Stars" did not even go to rehearsals, such rehearsals as there were. Choristers were paid fifteen dollars a week at the time when Jean de Reszke was being paid $2,500 a performance.

GATTI-Casazza brought Toscanini from Milan with him in 1908 and for a few years things changed. Toscanini's standards seem to have been the same from the outset of his long and glorious career. If "stars" would not rehearse, and rehearse properly, he would not conduct. They had double orchestra and double chorus during that regime, too, and many new stage settings, several of which are still doing service. Toscanini left New York in 1914 and refused to come back in spite of the supplications of Gatti and Mr. Otto Kahn. The opera company then entered upon its fullest repertory period, when seven and often eight different operas were given in a single week, making it impossible to rehearse anything properly. Caruso (until 1920) was a gold-mine to the house, as were, at various times, Farrar, Chaliapin, and others, but the artistic standards slithered on downwards while the surplus earnings accumulated. If Gatti had left the house before the great crash of 1929 he would have left a million dollars in its coffers. As it was, this surplus was dissipated before his departure and Edward Johnson took over (1935) on money provided by appeal to the general public. (Such appeals have been made periodically since, and one is going on now.) Mr. Johnson's regime was notable for the "democratization" of the house, in that the second tier of boxes disappeared (the third having gone years before) giving place



The Met in its youth—"the story is not pretty."

—*Culver.*

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to regular seats. He and Mr. George A. Sloan democratized it far more thoroughly by arranging, with infinite difficulty, the purchase of the house and grounds from the Metropolitan Opera and Real Estate (the boxholders) by the Metropolitan Opera Association. This occurred in 1940, and brought to an end one of the weirdest systems under which any great national institution was ever operated.

The financial story is fascinating and has never been so fully told before. But the "artistic" story (that is, the actual details of the production of opera for the past seventy years) is even more fascinating and Mr. Kolodin does it the fullest justice, year by year. He has had access to all the necessary records, and, probably most valuable of all, to the files of the late W. J. Henderson, critic of music on various New York newspapers for fifty years. Henderson's errors were, of course, inevitable during that time, especially about new compositions or new artists, but his lively, intelligent comment makes the past contemporary for us.

Mr. Kolodin's view of the new regime of Rudolf Bing is encouraging, and indeed on the record, so far as it has gone, the opera company seems to have been rejuvenated in many respects. The financial problems created by greatly increased costs have brought the fees for single artists down lower than ever before; the most important soprano or tenor today cannot command more than $1,000 a performance, and many soloists, or perhaps most of them, are on weekly wages. This does not entice some European artists who can make more money at home. But our author seems at the end, in spite of his rather acid account of previous administrations, to feel cheerful about the present and hopeful for the future.

It is improbable that many readers in the widest public will devour this big book as avidly as I did: you have to be to some extent an opera lunatic to gulp down six hundred pages with voracious interest. But as a work of reference the book is unique and should find its way into most of the permanent libraries. It is handsomely illustrated, contains many charts, tables, etc., a full index and a careful list of all operas performed at the Metropolitan, and when and how often. What is more, in all this great tome, filled with foreign names and specialized expressions, hardly a misprint can be found (one or two minor ones, like "Le" instead of "La," but few indeed). Not only Mr. Kolodin, but also Mr. Alfred Knopf, may be congratulated. **[*Alfred A. Knopf.* 607 *pp.* $7.50.]**

Dancing for Gotham

EDWIN DENBY,
author of "Looking at the Dance," reviews ***Anatole Chujoy's*** *new book on* ***"The New York City Ballet."***

THE New York City Ballet, a company characterized by brilliance of repertory and distinction of classic style, has grown up here in twenty years because George Balanchine and Lincoln Kirstein wanted to achieve what it is and more. The company is a fact; on the other hand, to make it or to keep it going was, and still is, impossible by reason. And so the story of their joint achievement is erratic, funny, and unintelligible. This story Anatole Chujoy now tells in a straightforward, factual, commonsense way, with the reference material libraries like, lots of photographs, and not without humor. He traces the story as simply as he can, describing the characters by their actions, the esthetic viewpoints by quotation, and supplying many interesting financial and organizational facts. He describes many ballets, sometimes in his own words, often in those of other critics. Only the evaluations strike me as less skilful. But in quoting European critics he often gives opposed points of view, and this, is interesting.

Mr. Chujoy who is editor of *Dance News*, the very lively trade paper of the ballet world, has long known that world inside out. A number of private anecdotes of how far-reaching decisions were made, several about Mr. Morton Baum particularly, are the book's charm. And its unpretentious, kindly, commonsense tone is attractive. It carries the reader undisturbed over the complex esthetic problems that underlie the story. Some are glanced at; but they cannot be discussed in simple terms or in the current of a chronicle of events. And many readers will be satisfied not to have had to face difficult discussions and instead to be left safely with a happy ending of European triumph for a favorite company.

A thoughtful reader will realize, however, that a profoundly original artistic conviction must have been the driving force in this particular story.

At the center of the achievement now are the novel power of an American distinction in classic dancing, and the power of Balanchine's extraordinary choreographic poetry. It is these two creative values that have made the company important. Let us hope that in another twenty years both will be so familiar they can be described quite easily. Mr. Chujoy expresses the same idea when he speaks of the company as *avant-garde*.

Despite the European triumph that closes the book—much like a charming last-act ballet apotheosis—Mr. Chujoy cannot add that the future of the company is any more assured now than it ever was. Beyond Balanchine's and Kirstein's personal force of character there is no guarantee for its continuity. There is nowhere else any readiness to assume responsibilities for the future. The New York City Ballet is now one of America's most striking artistic achievements. But unlike the great European troupes it ranks with, it still does not know from one year to the next where the money will come from to keep it going. That a capital so valuable should be so little protected is an extravagance, a gamble.

And so for the moment New York enjoys the beautiful and extravagant prodigy it has been presented with. In some wider sense the city is reflected in it.

And there is a touching hope in Mr. Chujoy's dedication of his book: "To the City of New York, extolled and maligned, whose people and administration made possible the emergence and development of a great cultural and artistic organization that bears its name and does it proud." **[*Alfred A. Knopf.* 388 *pp.* $5.]**

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Queen of the Dance

CARL VAN VECHTEN,
author of studies of Nijinsky, Isadora Duncan, and Pavlova, reviews ***Anton Dolin's*** *new book,* ***"Alicia Markova."***

IT is not difficult to recall the occasion (a certain evening in the Brooklyn Academy of Music) when I watched Anton Dolin actually seeming to PULL his partner out of the air, while they were dancing the valse pas de deux in "Les Sylphides." Apparently Alicia Markova had elected to remain in her native element, the ether.

This is not the first, or the last, time that she has employed magic. Her stage life is a more or less continuous miracle; I remember specifically the beats in the second act of "Giselle," those nervous, hopping, entre-chats that always enchant the house, and the beautiful bent-over bourrèes in "Rouge et Noir," less spectacular, but more moving. It has been said of some women that never a hair is out of place. Of Markova, one could say that never has an arm or a leg departed a quarter of an inch from perfection.

Naturally many attempts have been made to register this perfection, to describe this paragon's sense of style, her feather-like lightness, her infinite grace, her improbably beautiful line, and her most expressive emotional equipment. In 1935, Cyril Beaumont issued a slender volume on the subject in London, but at that early period a part of Markova had yet to be born and this book has long since been outdated. More recently, Agnes de Mille, another dancer, devoted an article to Markova. Brilliantly conceived and written, this paper purported to instruct the reader in the successive steps that lead to the making of a great dancer, but what emerged was a full-length portrait of the *greatest* dancer—an amazing piece of work, in which, nevertheless, several pertinent matters were scarcely touched upon. Very little is known, in America at any rate, concerning Markova's childhood, family life, and early dancing career. This deficiency has been partially atoned for by Anton Dolin, her former dancing partner, who has written an extended account consecrated to this dancer's personality and career.

Although Mr. Dolin has previously written and published several books about himself, he is better known as a dancing partner than in any other capacity. He is principally known, indeed, as the supporting partner of Alicia Markova. To put the matter still more succinctly, he is most frequently spoken of as the supporting partner of Alicia Markova in "Giselle." He remains, for the most part, the supporting partner in this new biographical essay. Standing modestly behind the ballerina, he takes only the most diffident bows, while she is permitted to curtsey. Occasionally, he lifts her to face the lights and the applause, awarding her his most fulsome praise. More often he dilates on the elegant turn of her ankle or the measureless beauty of her fluid arms.

"Alicia Markova: Her Life and Art" is only biography in the most conventional sense. The book lacks distinction and solidity. It is written guilelessly, with glaring omissions, if not too many distortions or actual misstatements of fact. Its breathless style is more suited to the medium of television than to the art of bookmaking.

Nevertheless, the principal figure emerges unscathed, as is her wont, under even more trying circumstances. If her complete portrait is not painted, at least the sketch is recognizable. After reading the book, one understands more fully Agnes de Mille's pregnant phrase regarding the ballerina: "She has been acclaimed the greatest dancer for just one reason: she intended to be."

Alicia Markova (with Hugh Laing)—"sense of style, improbably beautiful line."

The chapters about the school of Astafieva, about Alicia's mother and sisters, and especially the chapters about Guggy, the embarrassingly severe duenna, are largely fresh and bear internal evidence that they are true. Vincenzo Celli receives his just due for his important contribution in the way of coaching instruction in America. A vivid passage describes the occasion on which Sokolova discovered that Markova, the child, was bereft of the art of applying stage make-up. Choura Danilova emerges a charming figure, with her beautiful legs intact.

Author Dolin regards Kchessinska with wondering admiration because she engaged Mischa Elman to play the *adagio* for her "Swan Lake," but old-time New Yorkers will remember that Mischa Elman frequently played the "Meditation" in "Thaïs" for Mary Garden's performances at the Manhattan Opera House. (On at least one occasion, if memory serves, Artur Rubinstein accompanied Markova's dancing on the piano.)

OLGA SPESSIVA is never actually visible, but she is awarded several superlative paragraphs. Ninette de Valois and Lilian Baylis are permitted to appear in person and are more clearly defined. It is surprising that Diaghileff (Markova called him Sergypop) hardly seems to be here at all. His name occurs frequently, but he himself, never! Lucia Chase is barely mentioned and Sol Hurok is treated almost as shabbily.

Indeed, when Mr. Dolin writes about Markova's American career, he is most incomplete in his descriptions of her appearances with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, and he gives us a similarly sketchy account of her years with the Ballet Theatre. As Dolin himself was in America during this extended period, his omissions are the more curious. I think the explanation is that this book was begun in leisure and completed in haste. The author, however, is categorically explicit in awarding America the palm as the country where Markova came of age artistically and to which she gave eight years of her greatest performances.

Mr. Dolin's book lacks both an index and a complete list of Markova's rôles with the dates when she first danced them. There are, however, many interesting and unusual illustrations. **[*Hermitage House.* 319 *pp.* $3.95.]**

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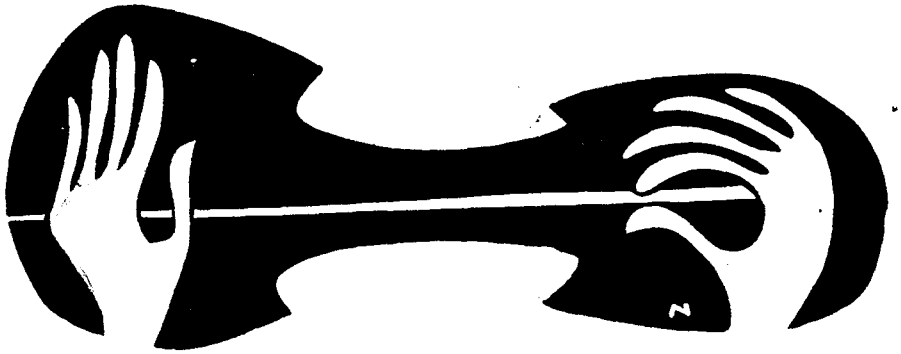

Feedbacks and Sizzles

R. D. DARRELL,
a specialist on records and phonograph equipment, appraises ***Harold D. Weiler's*** *primer,* ***"High Fidelity Simplified."***

ALREADY something of a best-seller in the singular marts specializing in radio "parts" and audio-system components, this paper-bound primer is likely to look uncouthly alien on orthodox bookshelves. But no one anxious to penetrate the mysteries of "Sound" should be deterred from investigating one of the most illuminating, practical Baedekers to that brave new world by the atrocious typography, sales-catalogue illustrations, formidable looking diagrams, and earnestly didactic atmosphere of these pages. Their author has largely succeeded where so many others have ignominiously failed in describing the functions of sound-reproducing equipment in terms clearly intelligible to any normally intelligent layman, yet which from a strictly technical point of view are neither evasive nor inaccurate.

At its frequent best, this is a model of "simplification" that puts to shame most self-help-writing experts, including engineers themselves as well as professional "popularizers." Mr. Weiler knows nothing about "style," but he does know what he's talking about, and he has the rare gift of communicating basic information with a straightforward power of conviction that gains immeasurably from his rigorous elimination of non-essentials. He's sparing in his use of analogies, which so often "explain" only at the high cost of serious fact-distortion. He introduces no more technical terms than he absolutely needs, and these are first lucidly defined, and then confidently relied upon as the solid foundations for the whole explanatory structure. Perhaps most helpful of all is the care with which he stresses the graphic point of his diagrams by a detailed verbal description of exactly what they show and why it is significant.

Although there is frequent mention of commercial models and a dutiful attempt to guide the potential purchaser's choice among them, this is not overtly, at least, an equipment selection and assembly handbook on the order of Canby's "Home Music Systems" [*SR* March 28]. Primarily it is an explanation of what the system parts actually do and how their technical characteristics (frequency-spectrum, power-output, and distortion ratings, for example) vitally qualify what we hear from any system as a whole. From a brief but illuminating discussion of the nature of sound and human hearing, the reader is logically led (backwards!) through analytical studies of loudspeakers (simple and compound), basic amplifiers, pre-amplifiers, compensators and controls, record players and tuners, to a final synthesis of an integrated system.

There are occasional slips, of course, in both lucidity and exactness. For one, the objective/subjective distinction between intensity and loudness is blurred (in contrast with that between frequency and pitch). The treatment of some subjects would be definitely misleading were it not that the necessary qualification or augmentation appears eventually, often many pages later. The final chapter on tape recorders, more cursorily treated than the others, is an obvious afterthought.

But for all such minor shortcomings (and the unappetizing format), "High Fidelity Simplified" is just that: it deals with true fidelity as well as the more easily practicable variety, and while the approach is direct and clear enough for the most technically inexperienced reader, it deftly disentangles the simple essentials of audio from the complexities without (*mirabile dictu!*) either disclaiming the latters' existence or illusorily minimizing their genuine difficulty. **[*John F. Rider Publisher.* 208 *pp.* $2.50]**

How It's Done

MARTIN COOPER,
British music critic and biographer, reviews ***"Notes Without Music,"*** *the autobiography of the French composer* ***Darius Milhaud.***

FOR the American translation of his autobiography Darius Milhaud has not only added a new chapter to his "Notes sans Musique"; he has also appended an authoritative list of his compositions, which extends to the phenomenal opus number of 320. Milhaud celebrated his sixtieth birthday in 1952, but his last chapter is full of projects and accounts of new works and it is quite possible that more new works have appeared since the list in this book was compiled.

Born of an old Provençal Jewish family, Milhaud achieved notoriety before fame, as one of the much discussed and revolutionary-seeming Parisian group of "Les Six." His early chapters give a very balanced and readable account of the struggles of those early days, thirty and more years ago. He has always shown himself an individualist, following his enthusiasms avidly, and writing, with extraordinary facility and spontaneity, the sort of music that intrigued him at the moment. Although he states his own view of himself as at heart a lyrical, Mediterranean composer, he has always shown deep sympathy for the more complex and expressionistic music of Central Europe, and the list of his works reveals a catholic interest, which includes the music of South and Central America and Palestine, as well as the "jazz" of the immediately post-1918 period. Much of his book is a chronicle of collaborations, nearly always happy, in works for the theatre or cinema. The ease and profusion of his music seems to have had a counterpart in his life, in which work, travel, and friendship appear to have played equal, and equally happy, parts.

The tone of the autobiography is factual rather than intimate, and it may be that the reader will gather from it more about the musical history of the second and third quarters of the twentieth century than about Milhaud himself. His writing, like his music, gives the impression of great fluency and facility, hardly ever checked by self-criticism or a desire to penetrate beneath the surface. His remarkable success as a composer has won him a pleasant existence divided equally between France and America, with many friends in both. Ill health has been the one major flaw, and the extent of his musical production bears witness

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to the success with which he has faced this serious handicap. It is pleasant—and a rarity in the world of the arts—to read in the last chapter of Milhaud's friendly relations with old members of the "Six" group and the picture, taken in 1952, of these *enfants terribles* of thirty years ago with their protagonist Cocteau has a pathos to which no music-lover will be insensible. Such a book, free of pessimism, self-pity, and apocalyptic prophecies of death and destruction, is doubly welcome today; and these chronicles of a hard-working and successful musical craftsman make wholly pleasant reading. [***Alfred A. Knopf. 355 pp. $5.***]

Just Published

The books described below cannot be reviewed in this issue because of lack of space. In many instances they will be reviewed in forthcoming numbers. New fiction is described elsewhere in this issue.

THE AMAZING MR. DOOLITTLE. A Biography of Lieutenant-General James H. Doolittle. By Quentin Reynolds. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts. $3.95. The prolific Mr. Reynolds, who has just polished off Willie Sutton, gives us the life of Jimmy Doolittle—pilot, scientist, engineer, businessman, and sometime soldier.

AN ANTHOLOGY OF CARLYLE. Edited by G. M. Trevelyan. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. $4. A collection of the best writings of the nineteenth-century philosopher, stylist, and enemy of the dry-as-dusts, chosen by one of the world's leading historians.

ANIMALS AND MAN. By G. S. Cansdale. New York: Frederick Praeger. $4. A brief excursion into the complicated relationships between men and animals, of how animals become parasitic, of how many have been extinguished by man, of how man has tamed and befriended many creatures, as well as a good bit of pure animal folklore as the author found it on the African Gold Coast.

THE COAST OF THE COUNTRY. Edited by Claire Kirchberger. Chicago: Henry Regnery Co. $3.50. An anthology of devotional literature culled from English works of the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries, and aimed at the needs of today.

ECONOMICS FOR YOU AND ME. By Arthur Upgren and Stahrl Edmunds. New York: The Macmillan Co. $4. The principles of economics, everyday and otherwise, as taught in colleges, and here explained with easy illustrations all can understand.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN HISTORY. Edited by Richard B. Morris. New York: Harper & Bros. $6. A brand new, tightly packed, and well-organized reference book that covers thoroughly most of the political, economic, religious, social, and cultural aspects of American history up to the present.

HOME IS THE HERO. A Play in Two Acts. By Walter Macken. New York: St. Martin's Press. $2. This play by the Irish poet-novelist, has already had a long run in Dublin, and will be a Theatre Guild selection for next fall in New York. It concerns the complicated homecoming of one Paddo O'Reilly, who has just finished a five-year term for murder, and has become a hardened man.

THE HUMAN KIND. By Alexander Baron. New York: Ives Washburn. $2.75. A kind of summation of the emotional ups-and-downs that most people have experienced in the "Aspirin Age," told in a mixture of fiction and autobiography by a British novelist.

INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY. By Ernest R. Hilgard. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. $7.50. Here is a book designed to give the layman a grasp of the chief tenets of the newest of the medical sciences, from its sources down to the present.

JOHN A. MACDONALD. By Donald Creighton. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. $6. A biography of the first Prime Minister of the great land to the north—a land that most Americans still take largely for granted.

THE LIVING BRAIN. By Walter Grey Walter. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. $3.95. Mr. Walter, who is one of the world's pioneering brain specialists, has put on paper some of the more fascinating physiological aspects of what goes on in the human mind in terms the layman can grasp.

THE MAJOR CAMPAIGN SPEECHES OF ADLAI STEVENSON. New York: Random House. $3.50. The cream of Citizen Adlai's speeches collected between hard covers, and given a long introduction by their author. An unusual book, considering the fact that most political speeches are hardly worth the paper they are read from.

MARCH OR DIE. The Story of the French Foreign Legion. By Howard Swiggett. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.75. The full story of the famed foreign legion, and an attempt to cut through the swath of fable which has steadily grown up around it since its organization in 1831.

THE MEXICAN VENTURE. By Tomme Clark Call. New York: Oxford University Press. $4.50. Having travelled 12,000 miles through Mexico in the space of a year, the author has set down his ideas on that country's political, economic, social, and cultural life.

MONEY, MEN, AND MACHINES. By Waddill C. Catchings. New York: Duell, Sloan, & Pearce. $2.50. A brief discussion of the Keynesian and other theories of economy, in which the author suggests certain changes to allow an always adequate and sufficient supply of money, per such agencies as the Federal Reserve Board.

THE NATURAL SUPERIORITY OF WOMEN. By Ashley Montagu. New York: The Macmillan Co. $3.50. Based on an article which appeared in this magazine, this is the American counterpart of "The Second Sex." Professor Montagu is convinced that woman, by virtue of her naturally stronger emotions, body, and brain, is easily the equal of man, and quite probably his better.

NO INNOCENCE ABROAD. By Michael Stern. New York: Random House. $3.00. *True* magazine's European correspondent, who exposed Major Holahan's murder a year or so ago, has now written a series of "profiles" on some of the romantics, good and bad, who roam Europe's wicked and worldly plains—to wit: Rossellini, Lucky Luciano, Virginia Hill, and George John Dawson, Europe's first honest-to-goodness billionaire.

THE PASSIONATE YEARS. By Caresse Crosby. New York: Dial Press. $5. The widow of Harry Crosby, the wealthy dilettante who committed suicide in 1929 in New York, sets down her remembrances of their madcap life together in the Twenties, here and in France, where they founded the Black Sun Press and published the early work of such as Hart Crane.

THE PSYCHIATRIST AND THE LAW. By Winfred Overholser. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. $3.50. A study of the law, which always tends to lag behind, and its relationship with the psychiatrist, whom it still views with suspicion. An illustration of what Dr. Overhosler is driving at would be the trial scenes in "The Caine Mutiny."

REBEL THOUGHT. By Herbert F. West. Boston: Beacon Press. $4. An examination of the thinking of some of the great men who have made the world go round with their liberal teachings and writings: Jesus, Socrates, Voltaire, Marx, and John Dewey.

SEEDTIME OF THE REPUBLIC. By Clinton Rossiter. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. $7.50. Professor Rossiter of Cornell University, a specialist in the field, has written an exhaustive study of the ideological causes and effects of the American Revolution, centered on the various men (the Adamses, Jefferson, Franklin, etc.) who knew liberty would work.

SIAMESE HAREM LIFE. By Anna H. Leonowens. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. $5. Here is the original book, first published in 1873, and reprinted for the first time, written by the gentle English nurse who reformed the King of Siam—a story better known nowadays in its various forms as "Anna and the King of Siam."

SO MUCH TO LEARN. By Gilbert Laue. New York: Henry Holt & Co. $2.75. A humorous account, based on the author's own experiences, of *his* bringing up baby, while his wife assumes the breadwinning by practising law.

SONG OF THE ARAB. By Rolla Foley. New York: The Macmillan Co. $3.50. A book that describes the religious ceremonies, pilgrimages, and songs of the Christian (Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant) Arabs. Illustrated.

STRATEGY FOR SURVIVAL. By John E. Kieffer. New York: David McKay Co. $4. A thorough examination by a geopolitician of the hows, whys, wheres, and whats of the Third World War, which Mr. Kieffer is convinced will be fought sooner or later with Soviet Russia. He gives the probable locales of battles, discusses weapons, and declares that the A-bomb will not be the be-all and end-all of such a conflict.

TALL TIMBER PILOTS. By Dale White and Larry Florek. New York: Viking Press. $3.50. The story of Bob Johnson, who gave up the life of a garageman in 1923 to learn to fly. He was one of the first commercial pilots, forest-fire fighters, freight carriers, aerial photographers, and aerial soldiers-of-fortune.

THREE CENTURIES OF NEW HAVEN. By Rolin G. Osterweis. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press. $5. New Haven is where the Elis live, but it is also an old town (1638) with a rich history, that Mr. Osterwald has written up from familiar and unfamiliar sources.

THE UNFAIR SEX. By Nina Farewell. New York: Simon & Schuster. $2.95. A guide for the young unmarried girl, built on the thesis that today's male is in general a scoundrel equipped with endless etchings, apartments, and snake-like lines. Antidote: the bag of tricks Eve picked up when she left the Garden, as interpreted here by Miss Farewell.

WHERE THE STRANGE ROADS GO DOWN. By Mary and Fred del Villar. New York: The Macmillan Co. $3.75. A couple of pots and pans, old clothes, two borrowed donkeys, and the spirit of Thoreau gave these two tenderfoot New Yorkers their impetus for a 750-mile hike through the Mexican mountains.

A WINDOW ON RED SQUARE. By Frank Rounds, Jr. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. $3. Mr. Rounds spent a year and a half in the American Embassy in Moscow, got around to as many places as he could while there, and put down his intimate impressions of that great city—its sights, sounds, people, and feel from day to ordinary day. Told in diary form.

WITH A QUIET HEART. By Eva Le Gallienne. New York: Viking Press. $4.50. The great actress picks up where she left off in "At 33," and tells us of the now defunct Civic Repertory Theatre, her continuous struggles for a better theatre, and new associations with such luminaries as Margaret Webster and Cheryl Crawford. —W. B.

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Queen's Music-Maker

HERBERT WEINSTOCK,
co-author of "Men of Music," dissects ***"Benjamin Britten: A Commentary on His Works," edited by Donald Mitchell and Hans Keller.***

THIS book is described on its paper jacket as having been "written in order to help the understanding of the millions who admire Britten superficially." The blurb also claims that these millions can be helped only "with that special tact needed in dealing with actual and potential friends." Being one of the millions (are we really so many?) who admire Britten superficially, I quickly turned to the book itself to find help for my understanding. I like to be dealt with tactfully.

In "Benjamin Britten: A Commentary on His Works from a Group of Specialists," I found the preface tactful, the acknowledgments polite. The going began to get heavy when, in the editors' notes, I found that there are three ways of referring to music examples in this book. " 'Ex. O' means that the passage discussed appears as a musical example; 'See Ex. O' means that the musical concept discussed appears as part of the musical example in question; 'cf. Ex. O' means what it says." I am afraid that I began right there to consider the possibility that the editors' conception of tact was not mine.

But the first article in the book—"The Man"—proved to be not only informative and well written, but also official in a way that few such articles can have been. It is by the Earl of Harewood, a first cousin of Her Majesty Elizabeth II. Immediately thereafter, however, I found myself sinking into a quagmire of pedantry in an article by Donald Mitchell entitled "The Musical Atmosphere." I stared for some seconds at its concluding sentence: "Hence the historical importance of Britten's European stylization—a Europeanism which, as it appears in the New English synthesis of Britten's late music, inevitably makes his Englishry of European validity." I had begun to feel, not so much that tact might be lacking, as that someone was pulling my leg.

I should say immediately that I think it completely preposterous to devote 410 pages of close analysis to all the works of a pleasant composer of the second rank who is not yet forty years old. And that some of the articles in this book are excellent, others indescribably bad. I came to suspect that the villain was editor Keller, whose announced lifetime aim is (again I quote the blurb) "to de-

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By CHRIS EMMETT. The Southwest, after the Civil War, was full of colorful figures, but none was flashier than Shanghai Pierce, a big, rich, and sometimes ruthless cattleman. His humor was brilliant, his cunning seldom matched. His lifeblood was business, whether it involved a quarter of a million dollars or a twenty-five-cent pair of sox. "A welcome addition to the literature of Texas and the range."—*A. B. Guthrie, Jr.,* author of THE BIG SKY. *Illustrated, with line drawings: $5.00*

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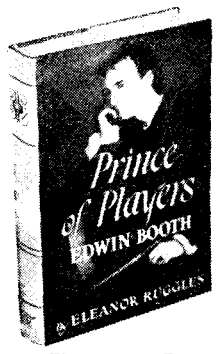

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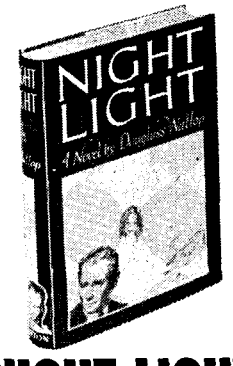

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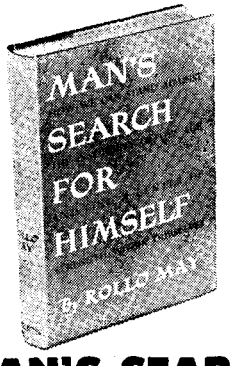

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NORTON

velop music criticism (which he considers to be in a pre-natal state) into a conscientiously and purely *musical* discipline, and to help in the creation of *scientific* musicology by applying himself to the psychology (psychoanalysis) of music." Co-editor Mitchell confesses that his own critical approach owes something to Keller's example.

I am not tactfully helped by a man (Keller) who writes: "I regard Britten as the greatest of all living composers whose music I understand"—for I can only interpret this charitably as a confession on his part to not understanding Prokofiev, Sibelius, Stravinsky, and Vaughan Williams (to name only a few composers alive when Mr. Keller was writing). Nor can I climb out of my superficiality as an admirer of Britten aboard such stuff as Mr. Keller's article "The Musical Character," a horrendous goulash of Freud, Spengler, and wild nonsense, the real purpose of which is to demolish Stravinsky and glorify Schoenberg (" . . . perhaps Schoenberg is the only one who has begun, despite and in conjunction with his powerful aggression, to resexualize music," "Today there are no extensive melodies to speak of outside Schoenberg's work . . .," and so forth).

In these turgid pages the attractive figure of the young man who composed "Les Illuminations," "Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra," and "Peter Grimes" gets lost. I sincerely hope, for his sake, that he is not a superficial admirer of himself and that nothing will persuade him to read this book. [***Philosophical Library. 410 pp. $7.50.***]

Music Book Notes

A MUSICIAN'S LIFE: In his volume **"Maurice Ravel"** (Holt, $3.75), Victor I. Seroff's concern is with the man, not the musician; he deals with Ravel's life work only in the most summary fashion. I question whether it is ever wise to divorce the life of a creative genius from his works, but Mr. Seroff has chosen to do so, and within the limitations of his approach he has done a useful job.

Already the Ravel bibliography has assumed tidy proportions, but the majority of books published to date are of small value. Almost without exception they are idolatrous in tone and suffer from a woeful lack of independent thought and independent research. Mr. Seroff breaks with this sorry tradition. Instead of warming over the same old material, he has made some investigations of his own —and the result is evident not only in the freshness of the facts but in the freshness of the telling. Better still, he treats his subject as a human being, not as a fragile statuette which might easily be shattered by an indecorous imputation. He suggests that Ravel may have been born out of wedlock; he calls him a "helpless puppy" for having irresponsibly let his *petit bourgeois* parents support him until thirty; he does not shy away from discussing Ravel's sexual abnormality. It is salutary to find a biographer of Ravel striking a judicial attitude after the general adulation to which he has been subjected in print. And it is valuable to have such thorough analysis as Mr. Seroff provides of Ravel's relations with the Diaghileff Ballet Russe and of the Ravel-Debussy controversy that raged in the Paris press forty-five years ago.

But having chosen the purely biographical approach, Mr. Seroff should have been more careful to make his account factually impregnable. Several errors of fact crop up throughout the volume, none of them glaringly bad, but enough to lessen its value as a work of reference.

—ROLAND GELATT.

THE DANCE IN AMERICA 1951-52: England has, and has had for several years, its "Ballet Annual," edited by Arnold Haskell. Now America furnishes one, **"Dance News Annual 1953,"** edited by Anatole Chujoy and Winthrop Palmer. (Knopf, $4.95). Covering the 1951-52 season, this volume is built much along the lines of the Haskell compilation, though it is not as detailed. There are essays by authorities covering various aspects of the dance in America. The book leads off with a summary of the New York season by John Martin, and subsequent essays deal with the modern dance, choreographers, theatre dance, design, notation, and esthetics. There also is a round-up of the seasons in Chicago, Canada, England, and France.

Some of the material present here is of little interest, but in all cases the authors obviously have been given free rein. There is no professional proselytizing for the dance but rather really critical articles giving cerdit where credit is due and otherwise letting the axe fall heavily. Beatrice Gottlieb, for example, writing on the modern dance, does not hesitate to bewail the faults and imitative tendencies of some practitioners. A partial list of contributors includes Lincoln Kirstein, Walter Terry, Leo Lerman, Oliver Smith, Ann Barzel, P. W. Manchester, and Pierre Michaut.

Appendices present checklists of new works during the 1951-52 season and a checklist of dance books published during that time.

—ROSALYN KROKOVER.

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BELLES-LETTRES

(Continued from page 23)

cluding continental and American ones. This section is the meat of the book, nourishing and well served. He even gives a sober summary of the Baconian heresy, an unusual thing to find in an orthodox book. He finds room for other kinds of humor—his own, too, as when he describes the painted bust of Shakespeare in the Stratford Church, with its "fleshy face, goggling eyes, and perhaps over-healthy glow." Or from Fanny Burney's report of George III (among other, dignified critics): "Was there ever such stuff as great part of Shakespeare? only one must not say so! But what think you?—What? Is there not sad stuff? What?—What?" There is, after all, as much variety in Shakespeare's critics as in his characters.

—R. H.

INTERNATIONAL POTPOURRI: In Rome the American-born Marguerite Caetani edits an anthology of new writing which differs from others here and abroad. **"Botteghe Oscure"** (Farrar, Straus & Young, $2), now in its tenth issue, is trilingual, with selections of prose and poetry in French, in English (British and American), and in Italian. Of those in French, the most interesting are the naïve memories of Vivette Perret, a neat story by André Dhotel (though its fantasy-ending fails to come off), and an essay by Jean Grenier, "The Disappearance of Man," a suggestive background for present-day abstract art. The brief Italian section includes a story by Silvio d'Arzo about an old woman's encounter with a priest, and an enigmatic one by Giorgio Bassani about the return of a young Jew driven from his native town by the Nazis.

The most moving of the English stories are Bryan MacMahon's "The Candle Is Lighting," about the harsh travails of childbirth in an Irish cottage, and Sylvia Berkman's "Beyond Another Shore," about the emotional travails of an American alien abroad. Fresh lyrics by Theodore Roethke and Robert Horan, and a fragment of the Don Juan legend by Ronald Duncan also stand out. The anthology takes its odd name from its street address, which may tempt the careless punster. But its contents are far from shopworn, and its owner's policy seems fresh and experimental. One only wonders how many customers are kept from the book because they can't pay in three languages.

—R. H.

Korea 1953...

I found them in the streets.

Pusan, March 25, 1953. "I found them in the streets. The red dust and foul smell of the war torn and overcrowded city enveloped them. The courage and strength of people and the weight of the world was in the little girl's eyes. Her physical burden did not seem too heavy for her to carry. She told me her father had been killed in the evacuation from the north and that her mother was sick. She had taken her little brother with her to beg for the day's food. I went home with her . . . home was a corner of the railroad station where her mother lay on a bundle of rags. Find Foster Parents for the children at once, please. It will mean the difference between life for this whole little family or death by starvation." Thus writes Robert W. Sage, our Director in Korea.

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NEW EDITIONS

WITH easy familiarity men have long called the Earth by the name of mother, but only recently have they come to know her at all well, and even the most learned among them are still at odds as to what they do know about her. What, for example, is her age? What is her physical composition, what her thermal history? Whence come the continents, the oceans, and the mountains? What causes earthquakes, what patterns do they follow, what can they tell us of our planet's interior? What have we learned of the Earth's nature from study of its gravitational field? How useful is the lead/uranium ratio for determining the age of minerals?

Answers to these and other questions will be found in the third edition of "The Earth" (Cambridge University Press, $13.50), by Harold Jeffreys, distinguished geophysicist and seismologist. Dr. Jeffreys anticipates the objection that his "book is too mathematical for geological readers"—and his formulae will certainly remain dark mysteries to all of us who are not advanced mathematicians—but it is possible, as he suggests, to read and understand only the non-mathematical passages, while leaving to mathematical physicists the task of checking the accuracy of the calculations. In considering every problem, Dr. Jeffreys considers and disposes of theories that do not agree with his own conclusions. He has eliminated the chapters on the origin of the solar system, contained in earlier editions, because no theory regarding the subject is "at present quite satisfactory." Radioactivity furnishes him the best clock by which to measure the Earth's age, and using it he arrives at a figure greater than 2,000 million and less than 4,000 million years. He tells us that by 1914 seismology had given us "a general picture of the interior of the Earth." He believes that the Earth was formerly fluid (drawing his surest evidence from the different composition of different planets), finds that the adherents of "an all-time solid Earth" are reduced to a "desperate" hypothetical "expedient," and concludes that the method of solidification appears to be "connected with the transfer of radioactive elements towards the outside by repeated crystallization." Thermal contraction can, in his opinion, account for "all the mountains that now exist or have existed." Elastic instability, he assures us, can supply no satisfactory explanation of geological processes. And, borrowing words to condemn the theory of continental drift, he declares: "It is quantitatively insufficient and qualitatively inapplicable."

Philipp Frank's "Einstein, His Life and Times" (Knopf, $5) makes almost no mathematical demands upon its readers. The author succeeded Einstein as professor of theoretical physics at the University of Prague, and now lectures on physics and mathematics at Harvard, but he has a tender regard for the limitations of the audience at which he has aimed his book; and he has aimed it with remarkable success, skilfully combining biography, character analysis, and scientific exposition into an attractive, instructive whole. Einstein lives in these pages as a personality as well as a physicist; when we have read them we are familiar with his quirks of character, his academic history, and his involuntary political involvements —and we should have at least a general idea of the revolutionary significance of the thory of relativity. Perhaps most surprising to the ordinary reader, but a key to an established scientific trend, will be Dr. Frank's, and Einstein's, emphasis on the role of the creative imagination in theoretical physics.

Edwin A. Abbott's "Flatland" has been reissued by Dover (paper, $1; cloth, $2.50). This pre-Einstein geometrical fantasy is one of the best things of its kind that have ever been written, for it is more than an ingeniously sustained fantasy: it is a social satire, with wit as sharp as the sub-lutrous end of a Flatland woman; it is an easy philosophical introduction to the Fourth Dimension; and it is a rebuke to everyone who holds that there is no reality beyond what is perceptible by human senses.

E. B. Uvarov's and D. R. Chapman's revised edition of "A Dictionary of Science" (Penguin, 50¢) is a handy little book to have on one's desk these days. —BEN RAY REDMAN.

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FICTION

(*Continued from page 18*)

ous in our age which cherishes Hölderlin, Nerval, and Van Gogh above many other artists, "Strange Laughter" may well be one of the most haunting works of fiction which afford insight into the world of those who are buried alive. [***Roy Publishers. 214 pp. $3.***]

tempt, in the last part of his book, to tell the story of an Hungarian patriot whose nausea at the events of 1939-45 and subsequent elation at his country's liberation from Nazi rule for a long time blind him to the sinister realities of the Russian victory. That story might have been a very important one. It is evidently close to the author's heart. There are, in fact, moments of sincere poignancy, and even of tragedy, in this melancholy tale. But in it, too, I'm sorry to report, melodrama is not dispensed with. —ROBERT PICK.

Notes

WAR-TORN HUNGARY: Lajos Zilahy's first novel published in this country, "The Dukays," was a massive family chronicle set against the background of pre-1914 and World War I Hungary.

Because of the author's familiarity with historical detail and high life as well as low, his undeniable humor and, not least, his own liberal outlook on life, he has avoided the Bertita Harding elements in his description of feudal society. "The Dukays" was a very readable book, on the whole.

This sequel to it, **"The Angry Angel"** (translated by Thomas L. Harsner and published by Prentice-Hall at $3.95) bears the earmarks of a hasty job.

It also suffers from the proximity of its action to recent history. It brings the story of the two most engaging characters of the earlier novel —the young countess and her lowly born scholar husband—up to 1950, and thus falls inevitably in the category of those anti-Nazi and anti-Communist fiction books whose adventurous plots and plottings cannot possibly do justice to the reality of human sufferings the past twenty years have inflicted on Eastern Europe.

All the features of that genre are present: underground groups that dupe the shrewdest Nazis and cross borders at will in a war-torn Europe, the well-organized hide-out for the persecuted, the plethora of convenient chance encounters, and in the offing the American haven with its miraculously wide-open gates. And all that genre's stock figures make their appearance again: the Victorian grande dame, the heroic scholar and champion of the common man, the high-born scoundrelly opportunist, the ever-resourceful loyal squire, the whore with the golden heart, etc. etc. Nor does the author's device of using diary entries, long letters, and protestations of "lack of information" raise it much over the level of melodrama.

However, Mr. Zilahy makes an at-

TALE OF TWENTY COWS: Among the Tlingit Indians of the Northwest there is a ceremony called the potlatch, a perfectly classic piece of conspicuous consumption, during which members of the tribe burn, break, and fling away their treasured possessions in order to demonstrate their eminence in the community and their contempt for material things. A similarly destructive feast occurs when a Canadian-American-Indian named Louis Champlain is presented with twenty cows and one bull by the United States Government in Dan Cushman's

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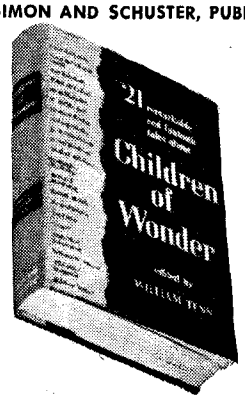

violent and comic new novel, **"Stay Away, Joe"** (Viking, $3).

Redskins begin arriving from every gulch and reservation in Montana to help Louis celebrate his Federal bonanza. In rusty Essex, in spring-sprung Hudson, they haul beer from the bootleg joint down the road, and soon the stack of empty beer cans mounts like shell casings in an artillery barrage. Blown home on the foam comes Big Joe, the no-good son of the family, fresh from combat in Korea and a season on the money rodeo trail. He brings an authentic scalp for his GrandPere, a wrinkled Indian sachem a hundred and five years old who keeps talking about the glorious days when buffalo filled the plains from sunrise to sunset. During the melee food runs short, and Louis makes the potlatch gesture of offering one of his gift cows as a sacrifice. In the excitement the beer-befuddled braves barbecue the bull.

The rest of this wild novel tells the story of the inevitable dwindling of Louis Champlain's Government herd of twenty. They go to underwrite Big Joe's consumption of beer, his pursuit of women, a down pay-

New Fiction

The great number of titles published during this season of the year makes it impossible for us to review all the important new works of fiction issued this week. Many of the works described below will be reviewed in forthcoming numbers.

ATOM AT SPITHEAD. By David Divine. New York: The Macmillan Co. $2.75. A kind of "Seven Days to Noon," wherein a young English naval commander discovers a dummy ship loaded with an atomic bomb in the nick of time, and so saves the Royal family, the government, and a million and a half citizens, all of whom are assembled for a naval review.

BREAKDOWN. By Patrick Marsh. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. $2.75. The trials and tribulations of that put-upon citizen, the nuclear scientist. This time it is a dilemna in his private life versus one in his professional and more explosive life.

THE CAVE AND THE ROCK. By Raoul C. Faure. New York: William Morrow & Co. $3.50. Frut, the protagonist of this satire, is a young, curious lizard, who makes a discovery—man—which his elders think best to suppress. He flees from the complications he has given birth to, to a safer, but duller, way of life on the other side of the salt flats.

CHARLEY MOON. By Reginald Arkell. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. $2.50. This is the story, as told by the author of "Old Herbaceous" and "Green Fingers," of a transplanted English provincial, Charley Moon, who discovers that, in spite of himself, he is a natural-born comedian. Here are his adventures in theatrical London and elsewhere.

THE FORTUNATE MAN. By Frank Tilsley. New York: Julian Messner. $3.95. A good man, used by three others for their own narrow ends, triumphs, and gives this new novel by the author of "Champion Road" its name.

GOOD MORNING, YOUNG LADY. By Ardyth Kennelly. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. $3.95. Dorney Leaf is a Salt Lake City girl, a gentle dreamer from an undream-like, poor background, who lives for the time when she may marry Butch Cassidy, an outlaw. Not a Mormon story, however. Literary Guild for May.

THE GUILT MAKERS. By David Weiss. New York: Rinehart & Co. $3.50. Anti-Semitism, as it is seen in the relationship of Saul, who is a refugee to this country and a former inmate of Buchenwald, and his American friend, David.

THE HIGH AND THE MIGHTY. By Ernest K. Gann. New York: William Sloane Assoc. $3.50. A reworking of the old "Canterbury Tales" idea, but this time the pilgrims are on an airliner traveling from Honolulu to San Francisco. A narrowly missed disaster shakes up the collective souls on board, so that a different, and perhaps better, bunch of people set foot on earth at the flight's end. A Book-of-the-Month Club selection for May.

THE HOUSE OF STRANGERS. By Edith Simon. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.50. The author of that excellent historical novel, "The Golden Hand," turns her hand to a contemporary story of a young widowed DP, who finds that kindness, in Scotland, as elsewhere, rarely comes without some form of cruelty, too.

THE INSPECTOR OF RUINS. By Elsa Triolet. New York: Roy Publishers. $2.50. This French novel won the *Prix Goncourt* (the first ever won by a woman), and it concerns the return to peacetime life of a former hero in the resistance movement, who finds he has little more than ruins to build upon.

ISLE OF DEMONS. By John Clarke Bowman. New York: Dial Press. $3.50. Historical fiction again, this time strung between the new and old worlds in the sixteenth century, and involving the love of Marguerite, forced to marry the humpback Tournon, and Pierre, who is a nobleman in Rabelaisian France.

THE LOST YEAR. By Hazel Robert. Cleveland: World Publishing Co. $3.75. A lost-and-by-the-wind grieved-ghost novel about the son of a tenant farmer, who comes home from the wars to spend an oat-sowing year in a dilapidated Georgia boarding house, where he hopes to leave, once and for all, his disillusionments with life.

M IS FOR MOTHER. By Marjorie Riddell. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. $3. A whirligig between an English mother and her daughter that originates in the misunderstandings and cross purposes engendered by their letters, phone calls, and occasional short visits together. Introduced by Ogden Nash.

NOT HEAVEN. By Waldo Frank. New York: Hermitage House. $3.50. Twelve stories are tied together with the unifying idea of "The Kingdom of God is within you" into an unusual novel.

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET. By Peter Julian. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. $3. A novel of suspense set in Communist-run Budapest that tells of one man's choice between a degraded security and freedom dearly bought.

A STRANGER HERE. By Robert Henriques. New York: Viking Press. $3.75. Mr. Henriques, who has run his hand over the Cotswold countryside in England before, tells the story of a wealthy but unbalanced and aging farmer, who goes amok sexually, and so drives his son and daughter and wife in the same direction, with disastrous results for all.

WEDDING DANCE. By Anne De Tourville. Translated by Mervyn Savill. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young. $3. This is the story of Gaud, a poor girl, who marries a rich widow's son from a neighboring town. Her mother-in-law, a jealous, vain woman, very nearly wrecks the marriage until Ener, the husband, comes to his senses. Set in the countryside of Breton.

—W. B.

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ment on a new green Buick, the purchase of a flea-bitten Ferdinand who thinks more of snoozing than he does of his lonesome cows, decorations for Louis Champlain's cabin to impress the prospective in-laws.

This is my first whirl with Cushman. It seems to me he has found a fresh arena for his roisterous comic talents, and I'm looking forward to the day when he makes still another Indian bite the dust-jacket.

—LEE ROGOW.

MODERN FAIRY TALE: It's a long time since we have had the Graustark type of novel with titled characters, fairy tale castle, and a real live princess. Miss Cost has lain **"The Hour Awaits"** (Lippincott, $3.50) in a Tyrolean chateau which, by the treaty of 1918, finds itself marooned in Italian territory and surrounded by Italian instead of Austrian peasants. Thus the setting may seem traditional, but the aristocratic exiles definitely are not. They indulge in completely modern conversation and gay badinage that would do justice to an up-to-date cocktail party. The result is really entertaining reading.

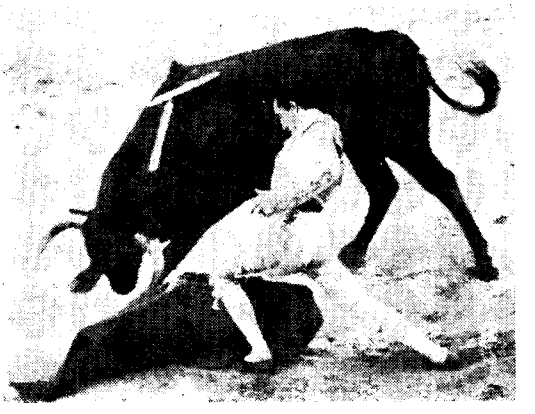
When the twilight of royalty fell on Europe, Princess Victoria Antoinette, a demure thirty-two, scarred her delicate hands scrubbing floors, making cheeses, and performing other menial tasks. However, Babenberg, her family name, is still one to command and when it is decided to send the heroine to England it requires an incognito as well as the sanction of three governments and two embassies. The book is the account of her twenty-four hours in London during which time she destroys an incriminating ancestral letter, adopts an English orphan, attends the opera, visits many exiled and picturesque friends, meets an old lover, becomes engaged to be married—an exhausting day even for a princess!

What the formidable family back in the chateau do not realize is that Victoria who was "considered plain but pleasant" had indulged in a brief romance ten years before when the family paid its ceremonial visit to England to attend the coronation of George V. Registered at an exclusive hotel under a fictitious name, the princess idles over her breakfast, wondering what her lover will be like now after ten years.

On this gossamer plot Miss Cost has spun a really delightful story, with so many amusing moments that it might almost be mistaken for comedy. But the echo of a lost world blows through her sparkling prose—a forgotten world of tradition and formal etiquette, of grace and perfect manners. —BEATRICE WASHBURN.

VANISHING SHIP: How could a ship vanish from the surface of the sea and leave no trace? What became of the crew? Why did two sponge gatherers disappear at the same time. And what was the giant footprint on the beach? These are only some of the questions Dorothy Cottrell sets out to answer in **"The Silent Reefs"** (Morrow, $3). And answer them she does, very convincingly too, tying everything up at the end as neatly as you might wish. You know not only the ingenious method by which the ship was made to disappear but also why and what the sinister Webber and the wickedly murderous Herera family had to do with it. Meanwhile, you've been taken on an adventure cruise of the Caribbean that is a constant, active pleasure. And you've met a number of attractive characters, in particular the resourceful Henri. Mrs. Cottrell has plotted well, though occasionally she throws in a scene which, if not quite a red herring, is fairly distracting. Apart from this cavil, "The Silent Reefs" is a superior piece of slick adventure fiction with a mystery motif.

—EDWARD J. FITZGERALD.



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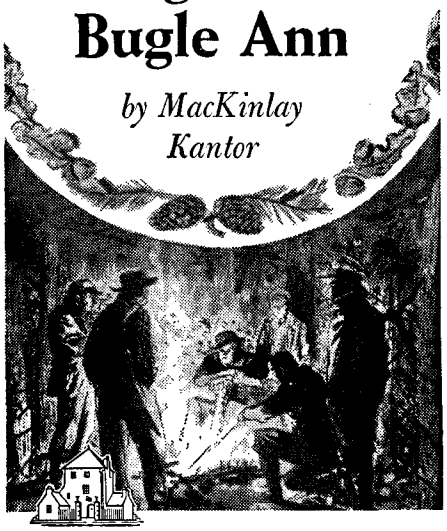

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INSPIRED AND UNINSPIRED WRITERS

(*Continued from page 13*)

his mind with such speed that his poem or his story is dreamed to its conclusion and his creative urge is thus satisfied, while the hand holding the pen or the fingers on the keyboard plod slowly along, far, far behind, in what seems but a wearisome repetition.

THE literary artist must create and master his own vocabulary. Like Humpty Dumpty he should be able to say, "When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." Or more accurately, "When I use a word it should convey to my reader just what I want it to convey, neither more nor less." For art is the record of emotional experience, and emotion has no dictionary language of its own. The dance has its vocabulary of bodily motion; painting has form and color; music has tone and tempo, pitch and volume. But the literary art must twist words out of their dictionary meanings, using them "figuratively," and borrow tone and tempo and volume from music.

And after the literary artist has become skilled in the use of certain symbols, he may find that they have lost their values and no longer communicate truthfully, just as the painter could once communicate to us a feeling of peace, security, and contentment by painting a sunlit meadow with cows knee-deep in a pool under the shade of a spreading elm, but now finds that such a picture suggests milk from contented cows. His soul revolts and he seeks new symbols, and paints a magenta cone balanced firmly upon three cerise parallelepipedons under a winged cloud, and labels it "Perfect Peace," and hopes there are those who will get the message.

Just so the poet is betrayed by clichés and worn-out figures of speech and overworked patterns of rhyme and rhythm; so he throws them away and strives through deliberate incoherence to reveal his emotional experience. Yet new painter and new poet both seek the appreciation of their convention-bound fellow men; for they attach titles to their work written in dictionary words, and set their type on rectangular pages and their paintings in rectangular frames instead of elliptical or sinuous ones, and send to galleries or to publishers, and grieve if they are not conventionally published or hung.

All out-worn symbols and devices used by the artist, if set aside for a time, perhaps a decade or a century, may regain lost values. "Hiawatha" becomes outmoded, because its rhythm and its tricks of word-repetition become wearisome, and parodies have cheapened it; so it is relegated to an attic shelf. A half-century hence some grandchild finds it there and wonders why he had never been told of so lovely a thing.

In the fourteenth century a poet found he could interpret his flashes of inspiration in a pattern of rhyme and rhythm as rigid as the marbles of Praxiteles — a limited number of rhyming sounds, six accented syllables to a line and just fourteen lines. Throughout six hundred years the Petrarchan sonnet has for short periods of time lost its power to convey love or hate or reverence or grief—and then some poet rediscovers it as a perfect device for his emotional purpose.

So the literary artist must be forever "practising." That distinguished craftsman Willa Cather was experimenting with new patterns for a novel when she wrote "The Professor's House" and borrowed from symphonic music the idea of introducing a theme sharply contrasting with the preceding one, and then returning to the opening theme. "The Dutch painters do much the same thing," she said, "when they paint a detailed interior scene and in it have a window which reveals a glimpse of an outside garden. I wanted to see whether the form of a novel might not gain by borrowing a device from one of the other arts."

Inspiration is the sudden revealing of some possession of the mind, hidden for a time and fermented or ripened in its hiding place, suddenly

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Miss Barbara Pinkerton in Thackeray's "Vanity Fair." 2. Ichabod Crane in Irving's "Legend of Sleepy Hollow." 3. The Clerk of Oxenford in Chaucer's Prologue to "The Canterbury Tales." 4. Mr. Chips in James Hilton's "Goodbye, Mr. Chips." 5. Jane Eyre in Charlotte Brontë's "Jane Eyre." 6. The Schoolmaster in Goldsmith's "The Deserted Village." 7. Lieutenant Osborne in R. C. Sherriff's "Journey's End." 8. Wackford Squeers in Dickens's "Nicholas Nickleby." 9. The Grammarian in Browning's "A Grammarian's Funeral." 10. Mr. Cathro in Barrie's "Sentimental Tommy."

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upsurging and ready for immediate use. Such an experience is not confined to those folk we call artists, whose stock-in-trade is emotional experience. Several years ago in a scientific journal an article appeared entitled "The Hunch." In it the writer asserted that science recognizes as valid and important these sudden mental regurgitations, so compact, so stenographic, that only the recipient can interpret them to others with the aid of his own awakened memory. An engineer, for instance, who has worried over the bridge which must finally be built, with complications of grade and curve and difficult terrain, finally gives up the problem for a time in favor of more immediate ones. Then suddenly in the middle of the night or in the middle of a dull lecture on some wholly unrelated subject he has a hunch—the bridge problem is solved.

If this is what happens when one "has an inspiration," then the experience should be both commonplace and universal, and inspired writers should be numberless, were it not for the fact that there are many human beings who live without perceiving phenomena and meditating about what they perceive; or who are capable of only dulled perceptions. The unstored mind can never become "inspired."

It is a characteristic of all artist folk that they must share the products of their creative fancy. The sculptor wishes to shape his dream into a marble which will stand where all the world may see it. The painter hopes to have his canvas in a frame, hung where appreciative ones may admire it. He would even like to linger near by to note their reactions. The dramatist and the poet are eager for the proscenium arch and the printed page. Artistic genius is never wholly content with self-expression as the sole objective. Even the shy maiden who locks up her emotional fancies in a diary and hides it under the handkerchiefs in a bureau drawer does not destroy it; she preserves it for that challenging audience—her unknown future self.

But inspirational flashes come up into the conscious mind so condensed and compact, so stenographic, that only the mind receiving them can interpret them to others; and the born artist who has mastered none of the techniques—who has no skill in the craft of interpretation—may be like the child born deaf: he becomes dumb as well, in both senses of the word, unless he learns to communicate somehow with others. Complete inability to interpret artistic fancies so that others may appreciate them may react upon the very ability to dream. The drabest little village is sure to have its mute inglorious Miltons, and they must number into the millions throughout this broad land: their hopes and ambition fill the coffers of corerspondence courses and writers' workshops and all get-literary-quick entrepreneurs.

One Sunday in a village church the preacher suddenly roused me from a half-doze by saying, "I love a look of agony because I know it's true; men do not sham convulsions or simulate a throe." Jingles always catch my attention, and I found myself annoyed by the faulty rhyme. Later I quoted the couplet laughingly to a friend and he said, "Yes, Emily Dickinson has a compact way of putting things, don't you think?" I cleared my throat uneasily and said, "Yes, hadn't she?" and when I got home I found it among her poems.

Later I happened to attend an amateur performance of Masefield's "Tragedy of Nan" and thought that even the struggles of amateur players could not make it a worse play than it was. Loyalty to Masefield as a poet led me to read it at once in book-form. In his preface he says that any artist at one time or another is challenged by the desire to depict humanity at its lowest level of misery, when the soul is utterly naked. He confessed that he was trying to meet this challenge.

THEN I remembered that Emily Dickinson had said in a rhymed couplet just what Masefield had tried to say in many pages of prose—"I love a look of agony because I know it's true." She had jotted the thought down just as it flashed into her mind, as she had many another of her inspirational capsules, without expansion by any of the devices of the poet's craft. All her poetry is of that unexpanded sort, and those who most enjoy it do so because they themselves supply the interpretation she failed to provide, owing either to literary indolence or to lack of interest in craftsmanship. Numberless Miltons remain mute and inglorious for one or the other of those two reasons.

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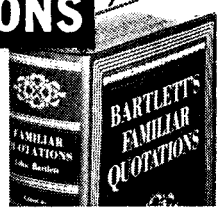

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his art; and he would still be the last to assert that he had won an ultimate mastery. But if the authentic artist ever revolts against rigorous self-discipline, how much greater must be the protest of those who never experience regurgitations from a subliminal storehouse, but merely yearn to be "an author!"

In long-ago summer days when I was teaching at the Bread Loaf School, a young woman asked whether she might write poetry if she entered my composition class. I told her I should insist upon a certain amount of verse writing. She then asked whether I would demand conventional poetic forms. I explained that I should, for discipline's sake, but that after she had shown some facility she might be as free as she liked. All that I could possibly do for her would be to help her master a few techniques of writing; only God, if He thought best, could make her a poet. She retorted sternly, "No man shall ever dictate to me the way in which my emotions find expression."

So I meekly told her that Robert Frost might be more lenient, and we went together to find him. He was his usual courteous self, and instead of answering her question directly he said, "You know, every time I play tennis I don't try to change the tennis court." When he saw that this parable did not register, he added, "I think I play better tennis because the court is there."

I don't recall what became of the young woman, but I wish I had thought to quote to her James Montgomery Flagg's comment about some verses of his own. "This isn't exactly free verse," he said, "but it's very inexpensive." However, I drew from Frost another treasured bit of wisdom. "I think," he said in effect, "that we all inherit a sensitivity to certain tribal rhythms. The poet who utilizes them gains added power to win response from his reader."

I have said that there must be many artists-at-heart who experience these recurrent inspirational flashes but have none of the craftsmanship which is needed to interpret them effectively to others. But, alas and alack, there are a million more who have mastered the devices and tricks of interpretation, but have nothing to interpret. Their minds may have inner storerooms, but nothing is stored therein.

There is so vast an increase of literacy in this country that the printed word now has a market value reaching astronomical figures. Several hundred thousand people moved not so much by a desire to share some flashing glimpse of truth or beauty, but rather by a desire to get in on a good thing, ask how they too can learn to write a story and how to sell it. Immediately several thousand other people offer to tell them a few simple but secret recipes at so much per recipe. In every corner of this busy land there are now workshops, bureaus, advisors, agencies, and schools which promise to do the impossible, and magazine pages are filled with their advertising. Some of them promise to create a successful author in thirty lessons; and alas they do. Now and then their teaching may have this regrettable negative effect: that some artist in embryo, experiencing an authentic resurgence, may ignore the flash because it seems to fit none of the patterns supplied by the get-literary-quick schools of authorship.

Stories written by recipe get to be easier and easier to write with practice, so that the expert craftsman can turn them out by a sort of chain system of quantity production. Things which are easy to write are just as easy to read; they call for no mental effort or reader's reciprocity. One can absorb a story labeled "ten minutes reading time" in as little as four minutes flat, and then start another; until one reads along in a sort of hypnotic state, perhaps thinking about something else while reading. It is astonishing what a lot of nothing one can read today and immediately forget that one has read it.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT No. 514

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 514 will be found in the next issue.

BAND — FLOUNGFAHFM

SB UNAGBPXA

GFFLOUGHSAT KM RWA

STAG LD LHABAND

GB FGPBA.

BUSHLCG

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 513

He who confers a benefit on anyone loves him better than he is beloved. —ARISTOTLE.

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(*Continued on page* 48)

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PERSONALS

(Continued from page 47)

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By Doris Nash Wortman

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Metropolitan insularity.	157 142 119 165 176 105 181 49
B. What every truck gardener must do as his young root-vegetables grow thick (2 wds.).	19 14 109 172 190 170 147
C. Bride of the Lammermoor's hero.	8 117 187 78 155 116 189 136 133 143
D. Flow of water from the top, that turns a certain vertical wheel.	9 58 122 44 139 41 34 110
E. Exposed; dug up.	154 107 12 97 56 178 144 126 28
F. Easternmost of the Lesser Antilles.	166 95 75 7 52 72 113 32
G. Insertion of a sound in the body of a word; as "ellum" for "elm."	188 103 17 149 99 111 76 37 5 90
H. Ecclesiastical haircut.	13 131 79 24 51 48 168
I. Exotic military dress adopted by some volunteer regiments in Union forces, 1861-5.	11 50 73 186 2 59
J. "A day and a night of Brahma", equivalent to more than 4,000 million solar years.	36 101 96 173 180
K. To surpass in making gratifying to a sense.	35 91 150 160 108 47 26 161 130 82
L. The pre-Israel Jewish settlement in Palestine.	182 145 87 125 29 69

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
M. *Extent in time, number, or quantity.*	20 31 65 83 164 85
N. Slightly mocking or malicious mischievousness.	93 33 42 148 153 179 191 174 25 156
O. Shocking.	45 16 63 88 80 128 183 67 98
P. Shakers' name for the incarnation of the female principle of God (2 wds.).	68 43 124 162 23 30 104 134 74
Q. A duckbill.	141 123 18 158 84 185 38 138 151 112 4 100 66 184 94
R. Homiletic poem by Tupper (3 wds.; 1810-89).	89 62 77 152 118 106 86 46 71 39 127
S. Ointment, salve.	137 6 129 64 3 10 121
T. The Shakers' name for their "Church."	102 120 167 146 1 22 27 171 57 70
U. To impose a necessary, troublesome accompaniment or result.	21 53 40 175 81 61
V. A maternity ward or division of a hospital.	132 169 55 114 115 92 135
W. To whistle; play a musical instrument.	159 140 177 163 54 60 15

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd WORDS, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. Alongside each definition, there is a row of dashes—one for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, write it on the dashes, and also write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. . . . When the squares are all filled in, you will find that you have completed a quotation from some published work. If read up and down, the letters in the diagram have no meaning. . . . Black squares indicate ends of words; if there is no black square at the right side of the diagram, the word carries over to the next line. . . . When all the WORDS are filled in, their initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Of great help to the solver are this acrostic feature and the relative shapes of words in the diagram as they develop.

Authority for spellings and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition.

				1 T	2 I	3 S	4 Q	■	5 G	6 S	■	7 F	8 C	9 D	10 S	11 I	12 E
	13 H	14 B	15 W	■	16 O	17 G	18 Q	19 B	20 M	21 U	22 T	23 P	24 H	25 N	■	26 K	
27 T	28 E	29 L	30 P	31 M	32 F	■	33 N	34 D	35 K	36 J	■	37 G	38 Q	39 R	40 U	41 D	
■	42 N	43 P	44 D	45 O	46 R	47 K	48 H	■	49 A	50 I	51 H	■	52 F	53 U	54 W	■	
55 V	56 E	57 T	58 D	59 I	60 W	61 U	62 R	63 O	■	64 S	65 M	66 Q	67 O	68 P	69 L	70 T	
71 R	72 F	■	73 I	74 P	75 F	76 G	77 R	78 C	79 H	80 O	81 U	82 K	83 M	■	84 Q	85 M	
86 R	87 L	■	88 O	89 R	90 G	91 K	92 V	93 N	94 Q	■	95 F	■	96 J	97 E	98 O	99 G	
■	100 Q	101 J	102 T	103 G	104 P	105 A	106 R	107 E	■	108 K	109 B	110 D	111 G	■	112 Q	113 F	
114 V	■	115 V	116 C	■	117 C	118 R	119 A	120 T	121 S	122 D	123 Q	■	124 P	125 L	126 E	■	
127 R	128 O	129 S	130 K	131 H	132 V	■	133 C	134 P	■	135 V	136 C	137 S	138 Q	■	139 D	140 W	
141 Q	142 A	143 C	—	144 E	145 L	146 T	147 B	■	148 N	149 G	■	150 K	151 Q	152 R	■	153 N	
154 E	155 C	■	156 N	157 A	158 Q	159 W	160 K	■	161 K	162 P	163 W	■	164 M	165 A	166 F	167 T	
168 H	169 V	170 B	■	171 T	172 B	■	173 J	174 N	175 U	176 A	177 W	■	178 E	179 N	180 J	181 A	
■	182 L	183 O	184 Q	■	185 Q	186 I	187 C	188 G	■	189 C	190 B	191 N	■	■	■	■	

Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 8 of this issue.

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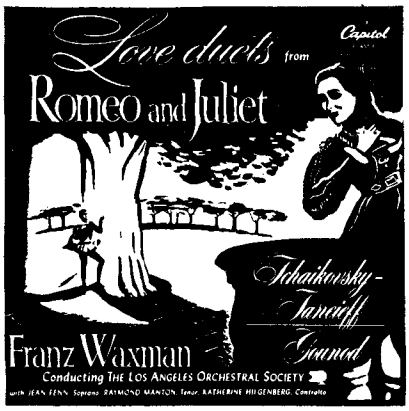

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SR RECORDINGS SECTION

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Toscanini and Beethoven

ERNEST NEWMAN

The dean of English music critics surveys RCA Victor's issue of the nine Beethoven symphonies conducted by Arturo Toscanini. Mr. Newman has been a prolific writer of books and daily criticism for over fifty years.

THE issue of the whole of the Beethoven symphonies under Toscanini on seven double-sided long-playing records* is a musical event of the first importance.

The dates of making the recordings are these: No. 1, December 1951; No. 2, October 1951; No. 3, November 1949; No. 4, February 1951; No. 5, March 1952; No. 6, January 1952; No. 7, November 1951; No. 8, November 1952; No. 9, March 31 and April 1, 1952. Numbers 4 and 5 were taken from broadcast performances; the remainder are presumably studio recordings. The orchestra in them all is the NBC Symphony. In the No. 9 the vocal soloists are Eileen Farrell, Nan Merriman, Jan Peerce, and Norman Scott, and the choir that of the Robert Shaw Chorale. One always regards the singers in the finale of the No. 9 compassionately as a company of gladiators entering the arena with a resigned "We who are about to die salute you," addressed first to the composer, then to the conductor. We rarely expect them to command success, and are satisfied if they only do something which, the poet assures us, is even more laudable than that in all good men's eyes—deserve it. The singers on the present recordings certainly command our respect for doing a formidable job very well. The orchestral playing throughout is superb.

The question of what is to be done with some features of Beethoven's scoring in the light of improved modern instruments and modern conceptions of tone-blend is not one that can be discussed in any sort of detail here; the reader has at his disposal a fairly large literature on the subject, beginning with Wagner's article of 1873 on "The Rendering of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony," with Weingartner's book "Suggestions for the Performance of Beethoven's Symphonies" (1906) as a notable middle point. In an article of the present kind one can do little more than follow the example of the Scottish preacher who told his congregation that "now, my brethren, we come to a very deeficult passage, and having looked it bowldly in the face we will pass on." Broadly speaking, the less we try to "improve" Beethoven's scoring the better. He had his own quite definite sense of orchestral color and texture, and we must beware of supposing that because his sound-complex is rarely that of the romantic nineteenth century it is therefore capable of "improvement."

Above all we must not make the common mistake of accounting for some of the things he did by the handicap of his deafness; for his malady did not become really serious until the latter part of his life. The earlier orchestral works, in which we most often meet with characteristic acerbities or even crudities—from the nineteenth-century point of view—were written when his hearing was not seriously impaired, so that we have no reason to assume that what he put on paper at that time represented anything but the colors and blends he wanted for the realization of his idea. If his deafness had blurred his sense of values at all we would expect the results to show particularly in his later works: but the score of the Ninth Symphony abounds in refinements of orchestral nuance to which there is hardly a parallel in his earliest works, while in the final quartets we come upon subtlety after sublety that almost breaks our hearts with its sheer beauty; and these works were written at a time when he was totally and irremediably deaf. The supposed effect of his deafness on his technique and his color-texture

*RCA Victor LM 6900, $52.40

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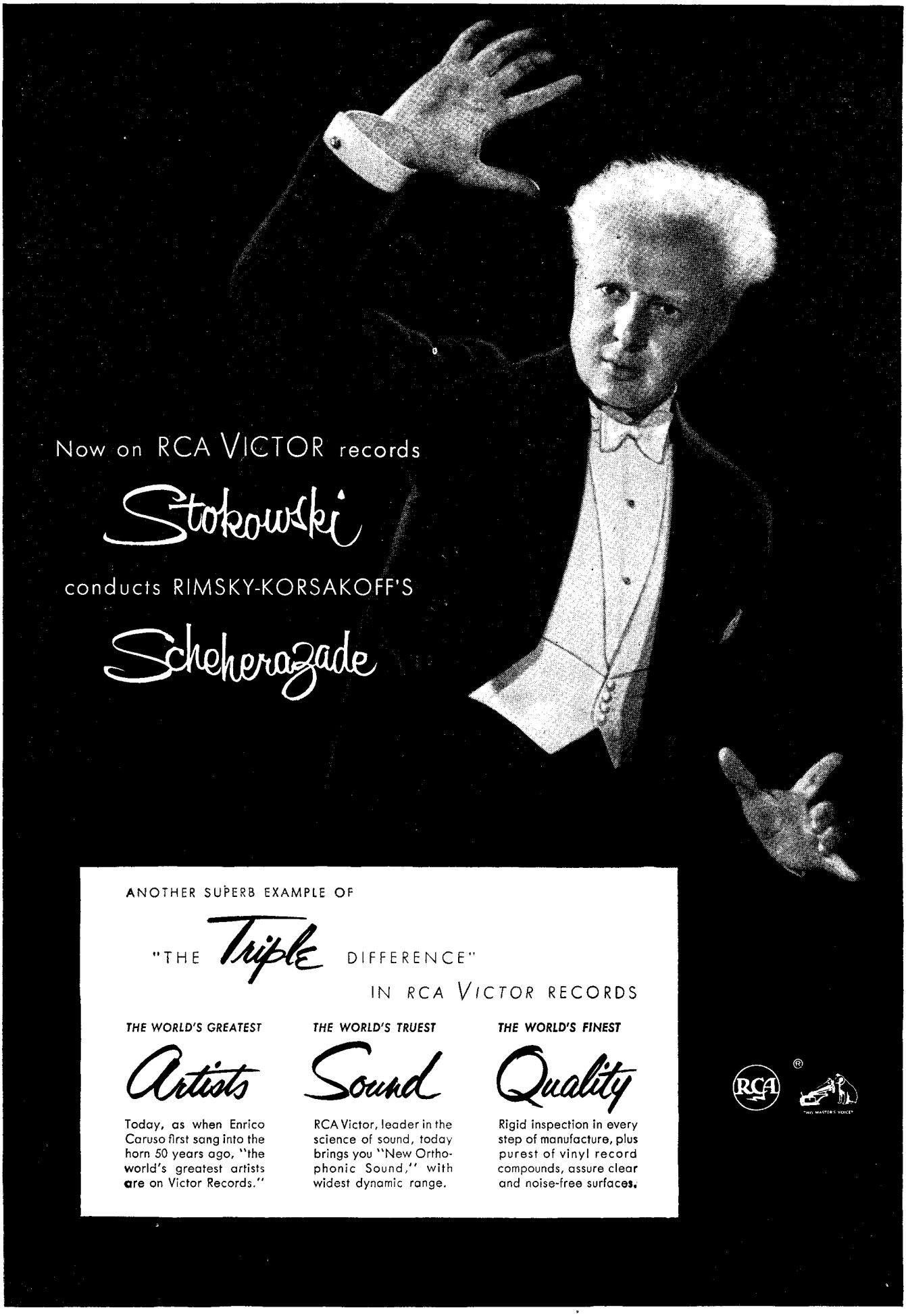
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has in fact been greatly exaggerated. Even when he was doing something apparently miscalculated and self-frustrating he knew perfectly well what he was about.

A case in point is the famous passage in the adagio of the last piano sonata in which he sends the melodic line soaring into the highest reaches of the instrument while another single line recedes further and further from it in the depths of the bass, until we are faced with an enormous gap between the two thin strands. It is altogether "unpianistic," but we need not set about excusing Beethoven on the ground of his "deafness." The deaf man, who had been a pianist from childhood, knew as well as any of us how bare and hollow that passage would sound on the piano; but he did not in the least mind the bareness and hollowness. He was following a procedure usual with him in moments of rapt mysticism—soaring gradually to greater and greater ecstatic heights in the melody and intensifying the sense of upward yearning by simultaneously pulling the bass further and further down. The general procedure can be seen to perfection in several passages in the adagio of the E flat Quartet, Opus 127. There, however, he was able to indulge himself to the full in the luxury of combining a rapturous ascent into the upper air in the melodic line of the first violin with the simultaneous descent to the depths in the cello—because he had a second violin and a viola to fill in the harmonies. Human beings having only two hands, these inner harmonies had to be sacrificed in the sonata adagio to which I have referred; so what we get there is, in effect, the equivalent of what would be only the first violin and the cello in a quartet. Beethoven made the harmonic sacrifice in the fullest knowledge of how the passage would sound on the piano. He himself would supply the harmonic filling-in in his imagination; and it is our duty to do the same when we are listening to a performance of the sonata movement. No musician, indeed, can help doing so who is familiar with and sensitive to the many instances in which Beethoven employs this generic device of expression in the later symphonies and the final quartets.

—Fred Fehl.

Toscanini—"an education to all musicians."

THIS seeming digression is not really such: it bears vitally on two points to which we must always give their due value when listening to Beethoven. The first is that it is wisest to play his music, for the most part, exactly as he has written it; the second is that there are often things in a score of his that have to be apprehended by our imagination rather than by our ear. A notable instance is afforded by the *allegro assai* section of the finale of the No. 9 in which the massed soloists and chorus first make their appearance. Everyone knows Toscanini's incomparable gift for somehow or other making all the vital strands of a complex tissue clear to us. But the passage of which I am now speaking defeats even him. (It occurs on side 14.) At the point where the soloists have the lines commencing "Freude trinken alle Wesen an den Brüsten der Natur," the cellos begin a series of trills that gradually spread to the remaining strings over some five pages of the score. These trills were to Beethoven of cardinal significance; they are examples of a technical device he employs again and again to express exultation—now wildly dionysiac, now quietly ecstatic, now mystical. Yet can any of us say that he has ever been made aware of them, in the passage to which I am now referring, either in the concert room or on records, except perhaps for a fleeting moment or two? They haven't the ghost of a chance to be heard through the massive total texture, with soloists and chorus tearing their lungs out to do justice to their lofty sentiments and their exacting notes, the wood wind and double basses taking a decisive line of their own, and horns, trumpets, and timpani all contributing to the volume of sound. For all the effect this chain of trills has on the listener's ear Beethoven might just as well have omitted them. But I would strenuously contest the thesis that here he has blundered. On the contrary, I take him to have known quite well that the vast majority of his trills hadn't a dog's chance of being audible in so dense an orchestral tissue. Why then did he insert them? The answer, I take it, is that since for him they were an essential factor of his *idea*, at this point he put them into his score completely indifferent to whether they would be heard by the generality or not. And the duty of those of us who have sunk ourselves in the score of the No. 9 is to hear them, as he did, with the imagination—a procedure which we have to adopt, indeed, when listening to many another passage in Beethoven.

Even Toscanini, as I have said, cannot make this passage in the No. 9 sound to the physical ear as the composer imagined it. But what marvels he achieves everywhere else in these records! Here, in seven priceless records (fourteen sides), we are given in abundance everything that has gone to make him the unique figure he is—his artistic integrity, his complete selflessness in the service of the composer, his all-embracing sense of the totality of a work, which is implicit in every one of its details, the curious and grateful impression he gives us as the performance unfolds itself that we are following the natural organic course the work must have

(*Continued on page 70*)

FOR THOSE who have not seen the special container RCA has provided for the limited edition of the Beethoven symphonies (which includes Mr. Newman, since overseas mailing of it would have delayed his receipt of the records), it may be endorsed as a handsome frame for a noble picture. The brown leatherette album bears a facsimile of the Toscanini signature in gold, and a medallion originally made in 1916 to commemorate a festive event in which the conductor appeared in Parma. It can be removed from the pocket provided for it on the album cover, revealing a printed likeness of the medallion beneath. Within are numerous pictures of the conductor, the NBC Orchestra, etc., an illuminating commentary on the relation of the conductor to the composer by his longtime friend Samuel Chotzinoff, and a complete series of program notes from the writings of the late Lawrence Gilman. Every detail of the production has been closely supervised, adding to one of the most notable composites of the kind a record company has ever produced. —I. K.

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Red Seal, Aged Fifty

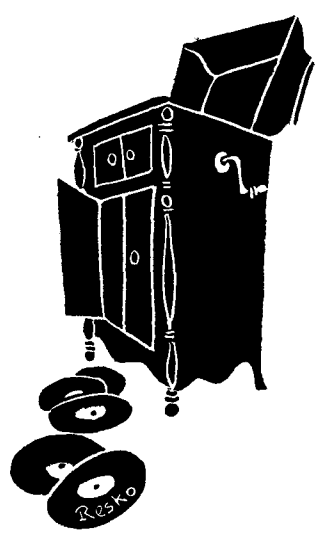
ROLAND GELATT

WHEN the popular Australian contralto Ada Crossley recorded the first Victor Red Seal discs fifty years ago this month, she did not so much establish a precedent as she did an institution. In 1903 "celebrity recording" as such was no longer a novelty. During the Nineties the studio of Lt. Gianni Bettini on Fifth Avenue offered cylinder recordings of Nellie Melba, Emma Calvé, Lillian Nordica, Francesco Tamagno, Victor Maurel, and others. How successful they were as musical documents we do not know. A contemporary account averred that they were "calculated not only to delight the present generation, but to charm and edify in equal measures generations still to come." Alas, the generations to come have found Bettini cylinders to be even rarer than Shakespeare quartos. All that remain are some catalogues to whet the imagination.

By the turn of the century, the cylinder as a form of recorded entertainment was giving way to the increasingly popular flat disc. The Berliner Gramophone Company of Philadelphia, which began issuing disc recordings in 1895, offered nothing in the celebrity classification, though its catalogue did contain some operatic recordings by Ferruccio Giannini (father of Dusolina) and Alberto del Campo, neither of much renown. When the Victor company was formed in 1901 it took over the Berliner catalogue, but for well over a year made no effort to entice artists of celebrity status to its roster.

That distinction fell to the Gramophone Company in Europe, which was a prosperous, three-year-old concern when Victor was formed. In 1901 the Gramophone Company sent its recording engineers to Russia and there made some records of the reigning favorites at the Imperial Opera, among them the soprano Medea Mei-Figner, the tenor Leonid Sobinoff, and the basso Feodor Chaliapin. To distinguish them from discs of a more popular character they were given red labels—to go with the red plush of the elegant stores in which they were to be sold. Despite their high price, these red-label records found a ready market, and their success emboldened the Gramophone Company to begin recording operatic celebrities throughout Europe. In March 1902 this firm engaged Enrico Caruso to record ten arias—the first truly satisfactory operatic discs in the history of the phonograph—and this session was soon followed by others in which such notables as Emma Calvé, Maurice Renaud, Mattia Battistini, and Pol Plançon took part.

Early in 1903 the Columbia Phonograph Company, of New York, followed suit. At that time this company was the major talking-machine power in America. Organized in 1889, Columbia had built up an extensive distribution network, covering the United States and the major cities of Europe, to market the "graphophones" and cylinders produced in its large Bridgeport factory. Toward the close of 1901, Columbia had added discs to its thriving cylinder business and for a while concentrated on recording the popular staples of the day—sentimental ballads, "coon songs," humorous recitations, and the like. But beginning in January 1903 and continuing through April of that year Columbia's recording studio echoed to more elevated fare. In those four months Columbia recorded seven of the Metropolitan's most notable stars: Suzanne Adams, Giuseppe Campanari, Edouard de Reszke, Charles Gilibert, Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Antonio Scotti, and Marcella Sembrich. These records—single-sided, ten inch—formed the Columbia Grand Opera Series; they sold for two dollars each, and the first issues were released in April 1903. Columbia had made a large investment in this series (the artists were said to have been paid from $100 to $1000 a side) and sales were disappointing. So much so, in fact, that Columbia stopped celebrity recording as quickly as it had begun. A few years later this company staged a comeback in the operatic field with recordings by Lillian Nordica, Mary Garden, Olive Fremstad, and Alessandro Bonci, but by then it had fallen far behind a formidable rival.



Columbia's ill-fated Grand Opera Series, whatever its shortcomings as a business venture, had the fortunate end result of stimulating Victor to produce a similar series. Columbia had let it be known that they were "the only ones in the talking machine business who have the means to employ singers whose time is valued at several dollars per second." The rising young Victor Talking Machine Company would not allow this sort of talk to go unchallenged. It countered with plans of its own for a Victor celebrity series. An agreement was effected with the Gramophone Company whereby Victor could issue the former's operatic recordings in the United States. At the same time, Victor laid plans for its own catalogue of celebrity discs. The new series, comprising both imported and domestic issues, would be called Red Seal Records.

A recording studio was opened in Room 826 of Carnegie Hall specifically for Red Seal repertoire. The first session took place on April 30, 1903, when Ada Crossley recorded four songs from her recital repertoire. C.H.H. Booth provided the piano accompaniment, as he did for many of Victor's early recordings. Two weeks later the mezzo-soprano Zelie de Lussan recorded three operatic selections and two songs. After that, Red Seal recording activity halted for the summer, but beginning in September 1903 the Carnegie Hall studio was busy again, and before the end of the year recording sessions had been held with Lillian Blauvelt, Giuseppe Campanari, Louise Homer, Johanna Gadski, Pol Plançon, and Antonio Scotti.

This was an auspicious list but it lacked a tenor, and Victor decided to repair that omission by signing up the Metropolitan's outstanding new singer, Enrico Caruso. He had already, as noted above, made recordings for the Gramophone Company; and even then he was no neophyte in the recording studio. In 1900 he had made three cylinders for the Anglo-Italian Commerce Company (an Italian associate of Pathé Frères) and two years later recorded seven discs for the International Zonophone Company (which offered stiff competition to the Gramophone Company until it was bought out in 1903). But these alliances were temporary. With the Victor company Caruso signed an exclusive contract, which fact was

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announced with a full-page advertisement in the *Saturday Evening Post*. At his first recording session—in the Carnegie Hall studio, February 1, 1904—ten titles were recorded, most of them remakes of earlier Gramophone discs which the Victor engineers thought they could improve upon. At his second Victor session a year later, Caruso recorded five more discs, this time in Victor's new studio at 234 Fifth Avenue. When he returned in February 1906 for his third recording session, the piano accompanist had been supplanted by an orchestra (if one can dignify the recording ensembles of that day with the name). The earliest Caruso recordings reissued by RCA Victor in the Treasury series date from this third Victor session in 1906.

Why had Victor persevered in a field that Columbia had found so unprofitable? Mainly because Victor's directors were not interested in making immediate fabulous profits from the Red Seal list; rather were they concerned with establishing the Victor talking machine as a respectable musical instrument that belonged in every American home. Red Seal records were supposed to give cultural status to Victor merchandise. This theme of the Victor as a musical instrument was hammered home to the American public in an extensive advertising campaign. It received fresh impetus in the autumn of 1906 when Victor did away with the unsightly metal horn of the "his master's voice" gramophone and introduced the self-enclosed Victrola, a piece of furniture that would grace any parlor.

BY 1907 Americans were buying Victrolas and Red Seal records in droves. John Philip Sousa, who was, ironically, a veteran recorder himself, viewed this turn of events with profound misgivings. "Sweeping across the country," he thundered, "with the speed of a transient fashion in slang or Panama hats, political war cries or popular novels, comes now the mechanical device to sing for us a song or play for us a piano, in substitute for human skill, intelligence, and soul." Sousa foresaw "a marked deterioration in American music and musical taste, an interruption in the musical development of the country.... The tide of amateurism cannot but recede, until there will be left only the mechanical device and the professional executant. Singing will no longer be a fine accomplishment; vocal exercises, so important a factor in the curriculum of physical culture, will be out of vogue! Then what of the national throat? Will it not weaken? What of the national chest? Will it not shrink?"

Despite these warnings the Red Seal boom continued in full spate for well over a decade. It would be hard to say how much of it derived from a genuine desire for good music. There was an undeniable snob appeal attached to Red Seal records. They were very expensive for their day (as much as $7 for a single-sided, four-minute disc) and their acquisition established one as both a person of culture and of property. An album of choice Red Seal records became as much a part of the refined American parlor as a leather-bound set of Dickens. But whatever the overriding impetus, the result was the creation of a priceless catalogue of operatic mementoes and their diffusion throughout the country to a large and avid public.

The year 1920 witnessed the culmination of the operatic Red Seal. Caruso's last recording session took place in September of that year, and other famous Red Seal vocalists—Farrar, Melba, Gluck, and Scotti—had reached, or were shortly to reach, the end of their recording careers. By then the process of acoustic recording had been perfected to the point where the sound of a relatively large symphony orchestra could be adequately captured on wax. Victor made a few shies at orchestral recording between 1917 and 1925 with such conductors as Muck, Stokowski, and Toscanini, but the repertoire was insubstantial—operatic overtures, stray movements from symphonies, short tone poems, and other *morceaux*—and during these years the center of recording activity, considered from a serious musical standpoint, shifted to Berlin and London, where the nine Beethoven symphonies, the major works of Richard Strauss, and the chamber music of Brahms emanated in heartening abundance. American record collectors—at least those in the *avant-garde*—began to speak slightingly of Red Seal musical standards. It was observed that while Victor engaged Fritz Kreisler to record Viennese bonbons, the Gramophone Company in England had him record the Mozart Violin Concerto in D.

With the advent of electrical recording in 1925, Red Seal recording took a new turn. It is significant that the first electrical Red Seal recording was of an instrumentalist, not a singer. Alfred Cortot was the musician thus honored, the date of the recording session being March 21, 1925 (Victor 6502, Chopin: Impromptu in F sharp). In April came the first "electrical" by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski, Saint-Saëns' "Danse Macabre," followed soon thereafter by the "New World" Symphony and "Nutcracker" Suite. The pace of domestic Red Seal recording of the symphonic repertoire, however, still lagged far behind that of Europe. At the Beethoven centennial, in March 1927, not one Beethoven symphony had yet been recorded electrically in this country, though England could supply us with all nine. It took many, many years for the Red Seal catalogue to catch up with the progress in Europe, but catch up it did. Today—to pursue the Beethoven example—the Red Seal catalogue offers at least two versions of each symphony. And it is worthy of note that the complete set of Beethoven symphonies just issued in Toscanini's interpretation was recorded in the very same building as Ada Crossley's "Caro mio ben" of 1903.

The program which Victor embarked upon fifty years ago has yielded much precious fruit. And fortunately there has been no break in the continuity of Red Seal recording nor in the regard which the Victor company has placed upon it. With relatively few exceptions, a master stamper exists of every Red Seal recording made in the last half century. There was a time when this musical bullion lay immured in the vaults at Camden. But in recent years, thanks to the Treasury reissues, much of it has been put back into general circulation—to the benefit of all concerned. Those recordings which were once written off as cultural window dressing have turned out to be not such a bad investment after all.

—*Culver.*

Caruso, 1909—"a priceless catalogue."

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Creators as Recreators

ARTHUR BERGER

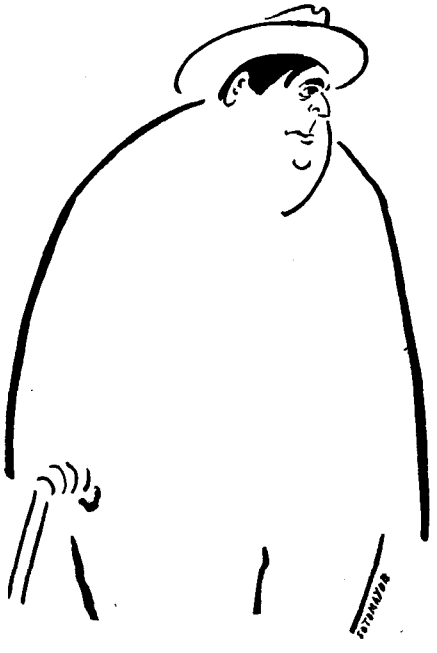
THE number of recording companies is so great now that there seems to be nothing special any more about the birth of a new one. It is thus something of an achievement for Contemporary Records to engage our interest so promptly even though it enters the field modestly and quite without fanfare. As its name implies, modern music is its domain, but its distinction lies in its emphasis on the *composer's* participation as conductor, player, or supervisor of the recording. The composers actively taking part as conductors of their music in the first two recordings are figures of no less prominence than Hindemith and Milhaud. A third LP, which includes Milhaud's two recent quintets, describes the composer as "director" rather than conductor, which is obviously making too fine a distinction between the two terms. Were it not for the high level of honesty and idealism that characterizes the whole venture, one might suspect that their confusion was being deliberately encouraged for sales purposes.

It would be more accurate to say "supervision" than "direction," but this is a minor matter, entirely eclipsed by the many gratifying features of the series. Among these features is the fact that all three discs are ten-inch ($4.45). It is, I am well aware, more economical to market twelve-inch discs from the point of view of ultimate income. But I am apprehensive of the effect this economy might have on creativity. It eliminates so many problems of coupling for the record companies when a composer fills out the whole side of a twelve-inch LP, that it is inevitable for this duration to become accepted as a minimum length for any given work.

While there is, however, always room for the well-sustained big work, by and large many factors today favor, as a norm, a short form that fits conveniently on a ten-inch side. I admire the courage of Contemporary Records to adapt itself frankly to this situation.

Hindemith's "Kammermusik" series was conceived within the atmosphere of discovery that characterized the Twenties. He was a young man fired with enthusiasm by the new musical experiences that confronted him on all sides. Having proved, not long before, in his early Brahmsian works, that he had a solid academic basis, he could respond to the pressures of the time without losing his head or settling for acrobatics. Also, his personality started to form quite early, and though it is obvious in "Kammermusik" No. 1 how deeply he was impressed by Stravinsky's coloristic and rhythmic devices, it becomes plain before the work is over just who its composer is. It is lively, unassuming music for twelve players, including accordion and percussion. "Kammermusik" No. 3 on the reverse side is a cello concerto that probes somewhat deeper. It is nice and compact—cleanly written, too. The "perpetuum mobile" character of the second movement works well, and the whole composition is so expertly and soundly planned that it is very satisfying, indeed. Here again the instrumental ensemble employed is a small one.

Hindemith's conducting has a wonderful spirit, and the collaboration he receives in both works from the Philharmonic Chamber Ensemble is obviously enthusiastic and uncommonly cooperative. The first recordings of this enterprising group, an offspring of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, are to be welcomed with the greatest warmth. The cello soloist, Laszlo Varga, also of that orchestra, does first-rate work.



Darius Milhaud—"tender lyricism."

The Philharmonic Chamber Ensemble also provides the accompaniment in the Milhaud recording for the vocal quartet in "Les Amours de Ronsard" and for the violist, Robert Courte, in "Concertino d'été." I prefer the Ronsard settings to the concertino, but it may be the viola playing that is in no small part responsible for my reaction, and a better performance might very well modify it. "Les Amours de Ronsard" is a twenty-year-old work of Milhaud in his most tender and quietly seductive vein. The writing for voices is delicately fragrant and there is imagination in the figures and timbres of the accompaniment. The first, "La Rose," has a Spanish lilt derived in typically Gallic manner and it is the most extended of the four settings. Milhaud achieves excellent nuances as a conductor, and though there are some moments when the pitch of the singers is errant, they constitute a choice group, all of them from the Metropolitan Opera (Ann Bollinger, Herta Glaz, Leslie Chabay, and Mack Harrell).

THE athleticism of the piano quintets and their ruggedly dissonant textures seem very far indeed from the tender lyricism of "Les Amours de Ronsard," but these qualities are just as typical of Milhaud—that is to say, of another phase of him which seems to be the almost calculated opposite of his characteristic sweetness. If I am not mistaken, the second quintet, which employs string bass, is instigated at moments by hot jazz, and it is doubtless the employment of this instrument that, for obvious reasons, accounts for it. The effect is achieved by subtle inference, and where the unleashed counterpoint of Dixieland is most strongly suggested there is no sacrifice of that little arabesque that amounts almost to an obsession with Milhaud in the formation of his melodic line in fast or *grazioso* movements.

The tapping on the bass with the wooden part of the bow (*col legno*) in the opening section of the second quintet is an original touch, acting as a kind of interference to the predominating lyricism and calling the ear's attention at once to the prominent role in this work of the lowest of the stringed instruments. The Stanley Quartet of the University of Michigan is the basic group in both quintets, supplemented in the first by Brooks Smith, pianist, and in the second by Clyde Thompson, string bass.

A tribute to the late Serge Proko-

(*Continued from page* 63)

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Cool, Followed by Hot

WILDER HOBSON

LUCKY GASTON—the chap in the old story who was always in the middle again—may have been popular in that connection, but in esthetic circles he is apt to be a bust. The middle-of-the-roader is commonly credited neither with courage nor taste. Let me say, for example, that I am daft about the painting of Arshile Gorky, and a bevy of ultra-modern gallery types will allow me to string along with them. Let me pronounce a ringing defense of Winslow Homer, and some of the most stalwart editorial minds of the country will be at my side. But let me toss off a few warm sentiments concerning Alfred Sisley, and the yawns will be virtually audible. And so with music. Bach—and you have a crowd. Webern—and there are lonely men who begin to prize your friendship. Chopin—pfui.

With jazz it is politic to be either hot or cool, to hold with the moldiest products of Smyrna, or stand up with Dave Brubeck and let the Goliaths do what they will. But I take off now in praise of some middle jazz, American classic tunes in handsome versions by first-class players, some of whom are rather heated, others of whom are coolish, but none of whom, in these issues at least, is doctrinaire. I should call the resulting music not lukewarm, just musical. The Mercury label seems to be specializing in this kind of pleasure. Here is a "Tea for Two" by Johnny Hodges and his orchestra (Mercury 8991). The great thing is the jublilant alto saxophone of the leader, but the whole affair is a fresh approach to a fine old subject.

The delicately forceful pianist Count Basie offers "Lady Be Good" and "I Want a Little Girl" with chamber groups including Buddy Rich on the drums and Paul Quinichette on the tenor saxophone (Mercury 89033). It would be possible to undertake a learned dissertation on the eccentricity of Mr. Rich's bass drum beats and their relation to cool ideology; the main point to me seems to be that the players have sampled and feel at home in various temperatures. Flip Phillips is a tenor player of force and no mean inventiveness, and he is surrounded by excellent help in "What Is This Thing Called Love" and "If I Had You" (Mercury 8994). The others are Charlie Shavers, trumpet; Oscar Peterson, piano; Barney Kessel, guitar; Ray Brown, bass; and Alvin Stoller, drums. Phillips joins the drummer Buddy Rich and Hank Jones, piano, in subtle trio performances of "Three Little Words" and "Carioca" (Mercury 89030). These Phillips jobs are all heartening records. There are vigorous and sophisticated things going on, both in the front and back rows. More power to the boys. It begins to seem as if a fruitful marriage between the hot and the cool was entirely possible. I would certainly expect that the years of be-bop experimentation might lead to a general richening of the jazz idiom without the necessity for trick beards or Moslem passwords.

And while still on this subject, Leonard Feather presents a long-playing "Hot vs. Cool—A Battle of Jazz" (M-G-M E194) with celebrated exponents of the styles. The hot contingent consists of Jimmy McPartland, trumpet; Edmond Hall, clarinet; Vick Denson, trombone; Dick Carey, piano; George Wettling, drums; and Jack Lesberg, bass. The paladins of the newer viewpoint are Dizzy Gillespie, trumpet; Buddy DeFranco, clarinet; Ray Abrams, tenor saxophone; Don Elliott, trumpet and mellophone; Ronnie Ball, piano; Max Roach, drums; and Al McKibbon, string bass. Now this is a great deal of talent to have alternating on a single bandstand, and some fetching things happen. Both bands play the same tunes—"Indiana," "How High the Moon," "Muskrat Ramble," and blues. I was particularly taken by Dizzy's work in the be-bop "How High" hymn—incidentally, and almost unbelievably, the first time he has recorded the item. He dazzles all over the number. But in the main I felt that the McPartland band was a little too tense and rushing to produce top drawer Dixieland, which should have great ease of flow, while the cool arrangements of the opposition seemed rather lackluster and mechanical when Gillespie was not heating matters up.

Flip Phillips—"no mean inventiveness."

NOW for a wild miscellany of three LP's adjusted to various special tastes. Jean Ritchie is a Kentucky girl from a family of deep mountain musicality. She has a lovely girlish soprano and she has made a fine collection of folk songs, with the guitar, the mountain dulcimer, as well as unaccompanied. The sixteen titles (two versions each of two of the songs) include "O Love Is Teasin'," "Black Is the Color," "One Morning in May," "My Boy Willie," "The Gypsum Davy," and "Cuckoo." The album includes a folder with the words, and highly instructive program notes by Edward Tatnall Canby (Elektra EKLP-2).

A violent shift from Kentucky may be made to the Voudoun religious services of Haiti, as recorded by Maya Deren, also noted for her experimental motion pictures. Here is a wealth of robust chanting and a gamut of drumming accompaniments, the nature of the ceremonies being the subject of a tightly packed note by Miss Deren (Elektra EKLP-5). The music and the commentary should do a good deal to dispel any notion that Voudoun is some kind of primitive, cataleptic seizure. I am bound to add that *as music* I do not find this recording as exciting as many native African dance documents.

There is some very gamey, propulsive Afro-Cuban music to be found on the LP "Cubano" (Mercury MGC-515). This is a small band handpicked from among Cuba's best: Gustavo Maas, tenor saxophone; Alejandro Vivar (El Negro), trumpet; Rolando Alfonso, tumadora; Bebo Valdes, piano; Enrique Hernandez, string bass; and Bill Barreto, drums. These men, on the face of it, are all thoroughly familiar with the latest American jazz developments, and their richly hybrid music is highly skilled as well as seductive. It is built to wear, and I have noticed no erosion yet.

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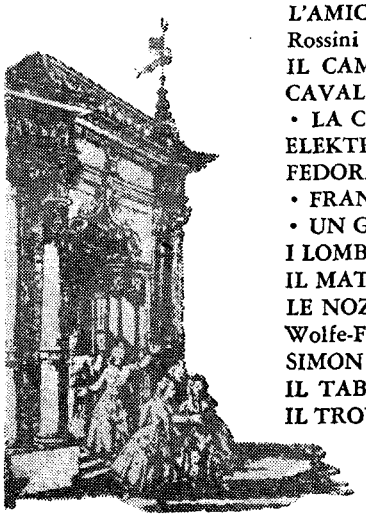

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Recordings in Review

Purity and Grace

CHOPIN: *Eleven Mazurkas. Guiomar Novaes, piano.* (Vox PL 7920, $5.95.)

THE refinement of Mme. Novaes's art has rarely been so well mated with appropriate material as in this sequence of mazurkas ranging from Opus 17, No. 4 (the pensive A minor) to Opus 63, No. 1 (in B). Interspersed are Opus 24, Nos. 2 and 4, Opus 33, Nos. 2 and 4, Opus 41, No. 1, Opus 56, No. 2, and Opus 59, Nos. 1 and 2. There have been some duplications, of course, in previous issues by Horowitz, Kapell, and Maryla Jonas, but this sequence makes for as enjoyable a session of piano playing as one could imagine.

All the performers named above have brought something individual to these little masterworks, but the infinite sensitivity of Novaes, her restrained but ample sound, and her aversion to exhibitionism in any form give them a character all her own. Rather than imagining them as dance pieces, to be animated by physical energy, she seems to convey their emotion retrospectively, as though she were reminiscing at the keyboard. All is order, composure, expressiveness. A remarkable record. Fine piano sound, too.

Stravinsky on Stravinsky

STRAVINSKY: *"Oedipus Rex." The composer conducting the Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra, with Peter Pears, tenor, Heinz Rehfuss, baritone, and Martha Mödl, mezzo-soprano, Jean Cocteau, narrator.* (Columbia ML 4644, $5.45.)

THOUGH "Oedipus Rex" is commonly accepted as a work of singular stature in Stravinsky's literature, its difficulties of performance have made public auditions rather infrequent. This first recording, in circumstances that suggest the composer's content, as well as consent, should do much to make it better known. Certainly it stands at an important transition point (1926-7) in Stravinsky's development, with influences that extend down to the recent "Rake's Progress" beginning to take form.

In terms of "opéra-oratorio," as it is called, the score makes its effects with surety and ever-mounting purpose, to a climax of power befitting the subject. However, for those not fortunate enough to have a score at hand, the lack of either the Latin text or a translation of it is a decided handicap. Robert Craft's annotations have their own kind of value, but such descriptive terminology as "one of the loveliest phrases imaginable" is scant help when one does not know what the words are. Though Stravinsky directed that the narration be delivered in the language of the auditors, the use of Jean Cocteau speaking his own French text makes this a dubious "authentic historical document" for us, as the annotation would have us believe. Since the words were dubbed from a tape made many months later, it would have been feasible to offer another version with an English speaker, thus fulfilling the composer's own preference.

Of the performers, Mme. Mödl is outstanding in her brief passage as Jocasta, Heinz Rehfuss satisfactory in his role of Creon, Peter Pears not impressive for vocal sound or dramatic impact as Oedipus. However, they are merged by Stravinsky into a cohesive ensemble with orchestra and chorus, both admirably qualified for what is required of them. The sound values throughout are first class, with a skilful aural montage of Cocteau's voice and the pre-recorded music.

Copland and Barber

COPLAND: *"Appalachian Spring"*; BARBER: *Overture to "The School for Scandal" and "Music for a Scene from Shelley." Walter Hendl conducting the American Recording Society Orchestra.* (ARS 26, $4.95.)

SINCE Copland and Barber write the kind of contemporary music that a broad public (myself included) can readily understand, I have ventured into Arthur Berger's territory, and find a good deal going on there that is worthy of wide attention. The standards of performance are excellent, the quality of the recording first rate, the total service to the literature decidedly worth while. Some twenty years ago, in the magazine *Modern Music*, the creation of just such a venture as the ARS was dreamed about. Rather than saying better late than never, let us be grateful that it was not prematurely launched, that both the techniques and the repertory exist to make and maintain a contact with an interested public.

What Dallas may be getting otherwise from its conductor, Walter Hendl, I haven't had the opportunity to experience; but he has a sure hand, an authoritative grasp, and a sense of style in his attentions to Copland's nature poem and Barber's responses to literature. A work of clean lines, strong sentiment, and artistic integration from its first hearing, "Appalachian Spring" continues to absorb and reward nearly a decade later. The two Barber pieces are by no means unfamiliar, if hardly so well known to us as the Copland. Each has the personal mark of Barber on them, the comforting atmosphere of a man writing music with as much a sense of where he is going, and why, as a skilled essayist. Another year or so of such well-chosen repertory, as artfully processed, and the American Recording Society will make reference to a native "repertory" more than a vain phrase.

Honor to MacDowell

MACDOWELL: *Concertos Nos. 1 and 2. Vivian Rivkin, piano, with orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Dean Dixon.* (Westminster WL 5190, $5.95.) *Concerto No. 2 (D minor). Jesus Maria Sanroma, piano, with the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson;* and HANSON: *Symphony No. 2 ("Romantic"), the composer conducting.* (Columbia ML 4638, $5.45.)

THE old Shakespearian question about the rose smelling as sweet by another name is posed, perhaps subconsciously, by a fresh experience with the D minor Concerto by the composer of "To a Wild Rose." The manifest quality in the music, its power and musicality, would certainly seem to merit more consideration from pianists (especially those of his own land) than has been the case. Indeed, if it were labeled a "Concerto No. 2 by Edward Grieg," I suspect it would be regular occurrence on our symphony programs.

For it seems plainly enough to be what contemporary esthetics calls an "evocation" of another composer's idiom (other times dubbed it an "imitation" or a "derivative"). Both performers have a strong feeling for such personal flavor as MacDowell imparted to it, and those who remember Sanroma's earlier version with Fiedler need no assurance of his capacity to deal with the almost-jazzy scherzo. On the whole, however, I think Miss Rivkin has a fresher, less-stylized way of playing this music, and certainly a more agreeable piano sound than Sanroma's rather steely one. She

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has also persevered to establish herself as an executive artist worth listening to. Honors among the conductors are about even, the Vienna sound mellower and better balanced than the remarkably clean, but harder, quality Columbia brings us from Rochester.

As to the pairings, that is any one's inclination—though mine is to the contrast of Hanson rather than the unity of MacDowell. The First Concerto has its interests, but they are, substantially, a foreshadowing of things done better in the Second. The Rivkin-Dixon teamwork is of a remarkably high order, leading to a hope that they will be given further opportunities soon in a broader literature. Hanson's second recorded version of his "Romantic" Symphony is even better than his first (for RCA in the late Thirties), and, without the problem of balance with a piano to fret over, the engineers have done very handsomely by him—as Hanson has by himself.

The Later Voice of Schiotz

BEETHOVEN: *"An die Ferne geliebte." Aksel Schiøtz, tenor, with Mieczyslaw Horszowski, piano;* also BACH: *"Meine Seele Rühmt und Preist." Schiøtz, with John Wummer, flute, Marcel Tabuteau, oboe, Alexander Schneider, violincello, etc.* (Columbia ML 4641, $5.45.)

THE steady progression of recordings from the 1951 Casals Festival has brought us abreast now of the participation in it of Aksel Schiøtz. This Danish tenor's struggle to regain the powers that made him a bright hope among postwar vocalists have engaged the sympathies of the musical world. It would be a happy privilege to say that the turn for the better is evident. But these records do not make such a statement possible.

There is no mistaking the superior artistry, the feeling for musical line, and the consistently fine German enunciation which animate the splendid recordings of "Dichterliebe" and "Die Schöne Müllerin" made by Schiøtz prior to his illness and operation. However, the vocal sound is strained and effortful, without the flexibility or control to do what Schiøtz wills. Of the two sides, the Bach is the more listenable, for the artistry of the associated performers is exceptional, the burden on the solo voice less than in the Beethoven. As reported in these pages within the past few months, Schiøtz has done considerable recording in Paris more recently. We hope that the next report will be a more cheerful one.

Rosenthal for Désormière

GLAZOUNOV: *"Raymonda." Manuel Rosenthal conducting the Paris Philharmonic Orchestra.* (Capitol P-8184, $4.98.)

THE illness that has kept Roger Désormière inactive these many months [see LETTERS TO THE RECORDINGS EDITOR, *SR* March 28] has at least revealed, in Manuel Rosenthal, another French conductor capable of carrying on for Capitol the work in the ballet field so well begun by his colleague. There is a substantial challenge, of course, in taking a great work and realizing its qualities successfully; there is scarcely less talent —if of a different sort—required in taking the sugar and spice of Glazounov's confectionery and making something really nice of it.

That, it seems to me, Rosenthal has done with eminently good taste, unfailing musicianship, and a sense of graceful line in this instance. I admired Désormière's treatment of "The Seasons" more than I did the musical material, but these excerpts from "Raymonda" show Glazounov working easily and productively in the Tchaikovsky tradition, with swelling climaxes, bright touches of color, and a warm flow of always enjoyable melody. The sum of it, especially as realized in Capitol's lustrous Parisian recording, is highly pleasurable.

Karajan's Schubert in C

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 7 (in C). Herbert von Karajan conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.* (Columbia ML 4631, $5.45.)

IT IS a reasonable supposition that the Vienna Philharmonic could turn out a superior performance of this work even without a conductor—and perhaps they could without Von Karajan. But with him, they are impelled to a tempi (for movement one) that sounds distinctly fast, a rather heavy, moodless treatment of the second movement, and inclinations throughout that are not close to the quality of the great performance by Furtwängler, the not-so-suitable but still remarkable performance by Toscanini, and the fine sounding though less powerful one by Krips.

Aside from the qualities of the interpretation, this is a decidedly odd-sounding reproduction, with passages of brilliance alternating with others muffled and indistinct, also slightly off pitch. Since my record also has an intermittent grind suggesting an off-center pressing, this may be the source of the trouble. Those who still are tempted, despite the conclusions advanced in paragraph one, should, if possible, hear the copy they are going to buy.

Manuel Rosenthal—"graceful line."

Introducing Battista

SCHUMANN: *"Davidsbündlertänze." Joseph Battista, piano.* (M-G-M E3011, $4.85.)

THE steady succession of well-conceived recordings M-G-M has given us lately continues with an addition interesting both for the performer and what is performed. So far as I know, this is the youthful Philadelphia-born Battista's first recording, and an auspicious evidence of a refined talent. In addition to the kind of velocity that seems to abound among our younger virtuosi, Battista has a suaver, more clinging piano sound than is commonly favored, an ability to play softer than soft as well as louder than loud.

It is clear enough, too, that Battista conceives Schumann as a more practical fellow than the daydreamers among the older generation of pianists, but his playing has a valid kind of sentiment of its own. These fanciful pieces can be overstressed to a point of boredom or understated to the verge of nonexpressiveness, but Battista is comfortably distant from either extreme. One might ask for a bigger surge of power in some climaxes, a livelier thrust of spirit in some of the later pieces, but it would be unfair to judge Battista's total capacity from one recording. On the evidence here exposed, there should be more to come. A word of praise may be added for the annotation of Edward Cole, who tells us all we need to know of the Schumannesque atomsphere.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Recordings Reports: Classical LP's

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Bach: Partita (B flat), etc. Dinu Lipatti, piano. Columbia ML 4633, $5.45.	Another cherishable issue from the dwindling stock of fine performances by the late Lipatti, who plays his Bach with the feeling, grace, and musicianship we have come to associate with his name. The recording is good rather than exceptional, but such art is worth having at almost any cost. Several chorale-preludes and the A minor (K. 310) Sonata of Mozart are also included.
Berlioz: "Romeo and Juliet." Dimitri Mitropolous conducting the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra. Columbia ML 4632, $5.45.	An ambitious attempt by Mitropolous to give us the orchestral material, at least, of this complex work, with results that can best be described as uneven. I do not hear the warmth of sound that seems to me appropriate for this score, or the power to balance the problems of pace and accent, contrast and force it poses. However, the grandeur of the imagination at work is frequently apparent, with results that may be called stimulating if not satisfying. There is impressive definition in the orchestral sound, but the climaxes are metallic and without luster, due in part to the sharp resonant impact of the Columbia studio.
Brahms: Symphony No. 2. Arturo Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony. RCA Victor LM 1731, $5.72.	With the appearance of this firmly molded, warmly phrased performance, only Symphony No. 3 is lacking for a complete Brahms cycle by Toscanini to match his Beethoven. A rounded evaluation may wait for that time, but it is clear, to me at least, that this is the most subtle, tightly organized Brahms No. 2 on record. I would welcome a warmer string tone, also more bass than RCA seems inclined to give us.
Brahms: Quartet No. 2 (Opus 26). Clifford Curzon, piano, with J. Roisman, violin, B. Kroyt, viola, and M. Schneider, cello. Columbia ML 4630, $5.45.	Thoughtful, artistic performance by Curzon and the three members of the Budapest Quartet of a work which does not grow in magnitude with the passage of time. It has its share of warming ideas, but they have served Brahmsian purposes to better ends elsewhere. Excellent engineering throughout.
Chopin: Etudes from Opus 10 and 25. Wilhelm Backhaus, piano. London LS 704, $4.95.	A dozen of the most attractive etudes from the two books, played by Backhaus with a mellow sense of style and a sufficiency of technique. However, it is quite apparent from his version of the F major (Op. 25), for example, that Horowitz has brought something into piano playing that goes beyond the Backhaus treatment. Resonant, well-balanced piano sound is a welcome trait in the recording.
Delius: "Eventyr" and "North Country Sketches." Sir Thomas Beecham conducting the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Columbia ML 4637, $5.45.	Any Delius from Sir Thomas is welcome, especially when he favors us with works of which he alone seems to know the existence. Of the two, "Eventyr" is the more substantial, though for all the interpretative art Beecham brings to it, the musical skein gets perilously thin at times. Fine sound from the orchestra and sufficiently acute reproduction for what sounds like a cough to be audible—though it might be a Beecham exhortation. (I do not refer to the scored-in cries by the players.)
Haydn: Symphonies No. 93 and 88. Hermann Scherchen conducting the orchestra of the Vienna State Opera. Westminster WL 5178, $5.95.	Westminster's accomplishment in producing the complete set of "Salomon" symphonies (those twelve final works Haydn wrote for London) is deserving of a citation above and beyond the call of duty, not to say profit. I have heard more relaxed treatments of the perennial No. 88 (No. 13 in some listings) than Scherchen's, but it is worked out with a perfectionist's passion for detail. Westminster has gotten a little screech into the Vienna strings that doesn't seem to belong there.
Khachaturian: Piano Concerto. Moura Lympany, piano, with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. London LL 692, $5.95.	More of Khachaturian's orchestral score can be heard here than in either predecessor version (Levant with Mitropoulos, Kapell with Koussevitzky) which may or may not be a virtue. Certainly Miss Lympany's treatment is less dynamic than those of the American pianists, of whom Levant makes the more music of this rather tinsely score. The weight and distribution of sound in the London recording is mighty impressive.
Smetana: Quartet in E minor ("Aus meinem leben"). Curtis String Quartet. Westminster WL 5199, $5.95.	Vigorous execution by the Philadelphia-based group of this work and the complementary "American" Quartet of Dvorak. However, the playing lacks the ultimate tonal richness these scores contain, especially in the climaxes, when the sound seems to be less resonant than four instruments should produce. The reproduction is expertly managed.
Rimsky-Korsakov: "Skazka." Anatole Fistoulari conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra. M-G-M E 3017, $4.85.	A product of 1880, this little-heard work embodies one of Rimsky's earliest efforts to evoke, musically, the folklore of his land. It has more than modest ingenuity, but a good deal of Lisztian influence that he was still to outgrow. With it are several excerpts from "The Snow Maidens," including the "Dance of the Buffoons," long a Stokowski specialty. It doesn't get such dazzling treatment here; rather a straightforward attention to business. Satisfactory sound.
Rimsky-Korsakov: "Coq d'Or" Suite and "Capriccio Espagnole." Ernest Ansermet conducting the orchestra of the Suisse Romande. London LL 694, $5.95.	Lest London be accused of aping Capitol's pairing of these two works, the reliable word is that the decision—a wholly admirable one, too—had been arrived at independently some time ago. As to the comparative values of these performances by Ansermet and the highly admired ones of Désormière, I can only say that, for my taste, the latter's blends more literary fantasy with nearly as much musical distinction as Ansermet's. Both sides are miraculously detailed, but the picture values do not spring so clearly to the mind as in the less polished but more vital work of Désormière. For sound values, however, this is a disc in a hundred.
Wagner: "Rhine Journey" and "Funeral Music" ("Götterdämmerung"), Prelude and "Liebestod" ("Tristan"). William Steinberg conducting the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Capitol S 8185, $5.72.	Steinberg's authority as a Wagnerian conductor (of which considerable has been demonstrated in San Francisco) is conspicuous in these spacious, warmly phrased performances—of which the "Götterdämmerung" conveys real excitement. The orchestra produces a startling amount of rich sound, and Capitol has produced a round balance that seems to fill all the air space of the hall with tone. —IRVING KOLODIN.

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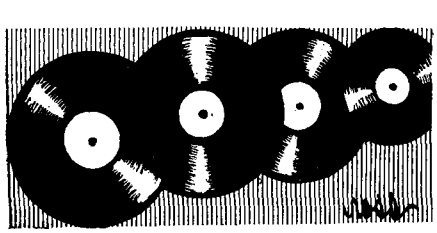
CREATORS, RECREATORS

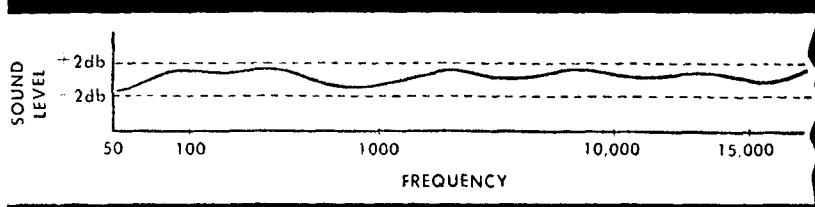
(*Continued from page 56*)

fiev is very much in order, and the new recording of his Fifth Symphony by the Danish State Radio Symphony under Erik Tuxen provides the occasion for it in this column (London LL 672, $5.95). In a way, Prokofiev's contribution to music is not the exclusive property of this department, since it established itself some time ago as part of history where it has earned an indisputable place. Genius and inspiration have long been acknowledged to be his gifts, and some of those objectives towards which Shostakovich has often struggled valiantly and enterprisingly enough came to Prokofiev as the natural fruit of his talent.

IT is with no little remorse that I recall the severity with which I had to treat him for his last new work which I reviewed here, "On Guard for Peace." My judgment of this potboiler has not altered, and if one were dispassionately and perhaps even cruelly to put artistic ideals before human life one might well find justification for being thankful that Prokofiev, though only sixty-two when he died, escaped cultural tyranny in due time. For there was always the danger that if he had been forced to write many more such works as this one under Soviet domination, the high opinion of his earlier achievement, sound though this opinion is, might ultimately have been shakened.

Prokofiev's Fifth was the first symphony he wrote as a Soviet citizen. Some banalities, to assure the required wide mass approval of the music, are undoubtedly in it. But there are also such fine episodes as the scherzo, the eloquent first theme of the slow movement, the spiraling figure in the strings at the very close of the symphony. It is too bad that the new recording does not pay higher tribute to the composer at this crucial moment. It lacks breadth, poise, and grandeur. Some of the lighter moments and the incisive ones are quite well done, however, and the orchestra is among the better European ensembles.





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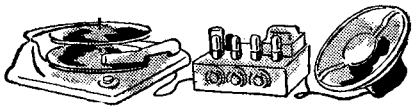

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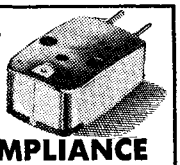

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ONE of the less attractive by-products of the LP age has been the tendency, shown by a section of the record-buying public, to judge the worth of a disc largely by its playing time. As editor of a monthly review published in this country, I have received repeated requests from readers to include the playing time in minutes as part of the general information given about each record reviewed. Needless to say, I do not consider a stop-watch part of a critic's equipment and would sooner vacate my "editorial chair" than help to encourage such an attitude, yet what is one to do with people who like to buy their recorded music, as it were, by the kilo?

I cannot recall this question ever arising in pre-LP days, though on 78-rpm discs we can find variations at least as wide as those on LP. (Among the current SP releases one twelve-inch side lasted but one minute and thirty-five seconds, while another comfortably exceeded five minutes!) Perhaps LP advertising is partly to blame for this attitude; "up to half an hour's music per side" was a proud claim which has caused many to look askance at discs providing considerably fewer musical minutes yet costing as much.

Decca, in particular, has been under fire from some of my correspondents who point out that this company spread "Das Lied von der Erde" over three sides whereas Vox managed with two, that the Kleiber performance of the Ninth Symphony takes four sides as against Toscanini's three, and that a number of its twelve-inch issues might well have gone onto ten-inch discs. The argument that this apparent wastefulness is in many cases responsible for the outstanding quality of Decca's sound cuts little ice with our price-conscious friends, most of whom are in any case possessors of "low fidelity" equipment, nor will the extenuating plea that many of Decca's earlier issues were made before variable groove-pitch came into general use interest them greatly. Instead, they will no doubt find consolation in EMI's fourth LP release, which offers on 10-inch discs such works as Brahms's Third Symphony (Hallé Orchestra under Barbirolli), Beethoven's G major Concerto (Gieseking), and Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto (Heifetz), which have previously always appeared on twelve-inch discs (including the American transfers of the last two recordings).

HMV's major offerings this month are "Boris Godounov" starring Boris Christoff, Boris Christoff, and Boris Christoff—it has not yet emerged from Hayes—and the eagerly awaited "Choral" Symphony conducted by Toscanini. In the latter, HMV's sound does not differ materially from RCA Victor's, though it is perhaps a trifle warmer. Most impressive in this performance seems to me Toscanini's refusal to overdramatize the Finale. German conductors, particularly since the advent of Hitler, have tended to lose sight of this music's real meaning, and have often "played to the gallery" in the most shameless fashion, but here is a true "Hymn to Joy" and a deeply felt expression of the brotherhood of man. As in the RCA Victor set, the fourth side is devoted to the First Symphony (remembering how often Toscanini used to play these two works together, the First should surely have been labelled Side 1 instead of Side 4), but I do not feel that, despite the advance in reproduction, this performance altogether eclipses the prewar recording with the BBC's Symphony Orchestra.

Also on HMV we have Schubert's "Die schöne Müllerin," admirably performed by Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Gerald Moore. The gifted young German baritone is far more in character as Schubert's young journeyman than as Tristan's faithful old henchman. I find him a more expres-

Review Resume

CHABRIER: "Joyeuse Marche," etc. Ernest Ansermet conducting the Suisse Romande Orchestra. London LL 696. *SR* April 11.

GOUNOD: "Faust" excerpts, etc. Geori Boué, soprano. Urania 7070. *SR* April 11.

MENDELSSOHN: "Scotch" Symphony. William Steinberg conducting the Pittsburgh Symphony. Capitol S 8192. *SR* April 18.

MENDELSSOHN: "Scotch" Symphony. Georg Solti conducting the London Symphony. London LL 708. *SR* April 18.

RAVEL: "Chansons Madécasses," etc. Jacques Jansen, baritone. London LL 644. *SR* April 11.

SCHUBERT: "Rosamunde" music. Leopold Stokowski conducting his symphony orchestra. RCA Victor LM 1730. *SR* April 18.

SCHUBERT: "Rosamunde" music. Eduard van Beinum conducting the Concertgebouw Orchestra. London LL 622. *SR* April 18.

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henchman (the role he fills in the complete "Tristan" with Flagstad issued here last month). I find him a more expressive interpreter of this wonderful song-cycle than either Gerhard Hüsch or Aksel Schiøtz. The recording, which appeared on 78 about a year ago, now occupies four twelve-inch sides and sounds considerably better than it did on SP. On a ten-inch disc Furtwängler and the Vienna Philharmonic can be heard in Schumann's "Manfred" Overture and Smetana's "Moldau." Not unexpectedly, the Schumann is better suited to this conductor's temperament and receives a sensitive and finely molded performance, while Smetana's well-loved tone-poem has its pedestrian moments as well as some impressive passages. Yet another HMV disc features the pianist Shura Cherkassky. On one side, supported by the Philharmonia under Fistoulari, he gives a magnificent performance of Liszt's showy E flat Concerto, while on the other he is heard in a group of Chopin's pieces, including the great F minor Fantaisie, Opus 49. Unfortunately, here, as in the Mendelssohn and Schumann/Smetana discs, the quality of the recording is little more than mediocre and from a technical point of view these HMV records simply cannot compare with the average Decca issue.

HMV's April SP's feature a further recording by the Symphony Orchestra of the Australian Broadcasting Company, Sydney, under Eugene Goossens. Though separated from the mother country by many thousands of miles, these players give an evocative performance of the lovely little tone-poem "A Shropshire Lad" by George Butterworth, a gifted British composer who lost his life in World War I, aged only thirty-one. With it comes Percy Grainger's lush arrangement of the celebrated "Londonderry Air"—played, as so often, at an excessively slow pace. Another pair of records brings us Gluck's magnificent Overture to "Iphigénie en Aulide" together with Mozart's gay "Seraglio" Overture, splendidly played by the Philharmonia under Kubelik, if somewhat coarsely recorded.

Lastly, on Parlophone, there is the customary choice selection from Karl Haas and the London Baroque Ensemble. On this occasion they play four seventeenth-century marches by Lully and l'Aîné for various combinations of oboes, cor anglais, bassoons, and side drums, among them the "Marche du Prince d'Orange" whose stirring tune many of us know as "Lilliburlero." This may not rank among the best discs the London Baroque Ensemble has given us, but it is nevertheless interesting and most attractive. —THOMAS HEINITZ.

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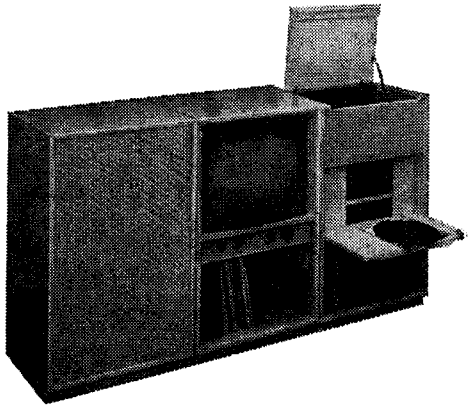

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Organ Points

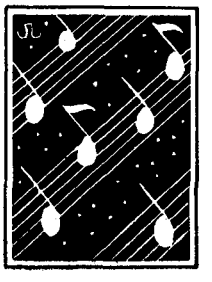
LISZT: *Fantasia & Fugue on "Ad Nos, Ad Salutarem Undam"*; WIDOR: *Variations from "Symphonie Gothique." Jeanne Demessieux, Victoria Hall, Geneva.* (London LL 697, $5.95.)

BACH: *Passacaglia & Fugue in C Minor; the Six "Schübler" Chorales, etc. Carl Weinrich, Princeton University Chapel.* (M-G-M E 3021, $4.85.)

BACH: *"Festival"—Chorales and Chorale-preludes by Bach, Krebs, Homilius. E. Power Biggs, organ, with wind instruments & timpani.* (Columbia ML 4635, $5.45.)

THREE of today's most accomplished organists and two distinct musical styles come together in these recent LP additions to the listing of pipe organ recordings.

Jeanne Demessieux is a diminutive Parisienne with a dramatic style of playing. Aside from the bravura touches, she is an artist with taste and a wealth of technique. The Liszt piece is one of the Abbé's two principal works for the organ, and as one might expect he makes the same demands upon this instrument as he did upon the piano, though with somewhat more satisfying results. A quiet, slow middle section is sandwiched between two pillars of fire that rock the walls and sound magnificent on a quality high-fidelity system, though neighbors might not share the enthusiasm. It is based on a Chorale from the first act of Meyerbeer's opera "Le Prophète," with its two phrases presented separately in the Fantasia, together in the slow section, and once again, though in ¾ time, as the statement of the Fugue. There is much interesting writing here, a little which is not, and the playing is superb throughout. The Widor composition which is coupled to the Liszt is the final movement of the ninth of ten "symphonies" produced by the Paris organist who was Schweitzer's teacher. It is supremely organistic, in a nineteenth-century way, well organized, with many powerful moments along the way. It is a pity it has not more to say.



One might think that the last thing we need is another recording of Bach's C Minor Passacaglia and Fugue, since it has been done by Biggs, Crozier, Heitmann, Marchal, Walcha, and Ernest White; not to mention the orchestral versions by Monteux, Ormandy, and Stokowski. About four months ago M-G-M released Carl Weinrich's reading of it on a ten-inch LP. Now the same performance is available on the larger size disc, in company with the six "Schübler" chorales, two chorale-preludes, and the Bach transcription of Vivaldi's A minor Concerto. It is M-G-M's intention to provide "A Survey of Bach's Organ Music," with Dr. Weinrich playing on his home grounds of Princeton University—the so-called "Praetorius" organ.

Weinrich's "Passacaglia" is done beautifully and simply, neatly avoids Heitmann's heavy-handedness, White's austerity, Marchal's over-romantic approach. The organ in the Princeton chapel is far better suited to Bach than Crozier's Kilbourn Hall instrument, and the dynamic development is cleaner. In the six "Schübler" chorales, there is now and again a tendency toward obscuring the *cantus firmus* under the accompanying figurations. This is particularly noticeable in the second, "Whither Shall I Flee?" On the whole, however, it is a remarkably successful recording.

Our colleague from Cambridge adds to the Columbia organ music library this month with another collection of "joyful" music—Bach chorales and chorale-preludes, with the addition of works for trumpet and organ by Krebs and Homilius, Bach's pupils. The Weinrich record and this one would make a splendid introduction to Bach's organ music, since the programming has been directed toward some of the most listenable of all the music from the fertile brain of the Leipzig cantor. As he does frequently on his Sunday morning radio broadcasts, E. Power Biggs supplements the organ with competent instrumentalists from the Boston Symphony Orchestra. The collection includes chorales by Martin Luther, Crüger, and Bourgeois, to mention three, and highlights "Sleepers, Wake!" in two versions, "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow," and two settings of "A Mighty Fortress." Familiarity of the music will surely enhance the popularity of this record, though it has merit enough to stand on its own feet.

—DAVID HEBB.

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Broadway Duo

BERNSTEIN - GREEN - COMDEN: *"Wonderful Town." Rosalind Russell, George Gaynes, Edith Adams, etc.* (Decca DL 9010. $5.85.)

DUKE-NASH: *"Two's Company." Bette Davis, Hiram Sherman, David Burns, etc.* (RCA Victor LOC 1009, $5.72.)

THE thesis that concert-hall composers can't write for the Broadway theatre, and that movie personalities can't make the grade on the live stage, can be argued beautifully with the aid of one piece of evidence above mentioned, or refuted entirely with the other. Devoid of in-the-flesh acquaintance with either show, the records tell me that "Two's Company," for all the talents involved, is a show that went wrong and wronger, whereas "Wonderful Town" went from better to superb.

Thanks to the nimble wits of Betty Comden and Adolph Green, abetted by much racy musical thinking by Bernstein, Miss Russell has the chance to exhibit a drollery, comic sense, and sheer power to fascinate the ear beyond anything one would have imagined from her screen work. "One Hundred Easy Ways to Lose a Man," "Conga," "Swing," and "Wrong Note Rag" are all delightful inventions, but the Russell delivery makes them pulsate with the joy that comes to a performer who has a good thing and knows what to do with it. "Ohio" is a likable tune, but "A Quiet Girl" is less to my taste. In all, Bernstein's touch is much surer in the situation material, leading one to the hope that he and his expert collaborators will go on to something even more adventurous next time, leaving the "plug" tune formula to those who fit it better.

Post-mortems are about all that can be tendered on behalf of "Two's Company," for which there was no crowd. But it is safe to say that, in a wholly oblique way, Miss Davis has etched a record that will be played with delight for years to come. Hers is a unique voice, the style of delivery Jenkins-influenced, though not a slavish copy of that incomparable diva. —I. K.

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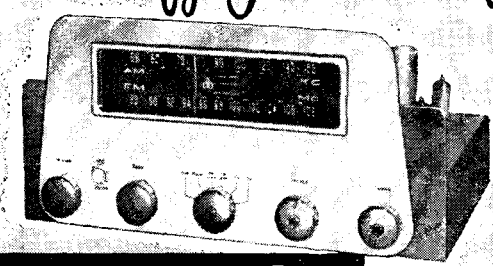

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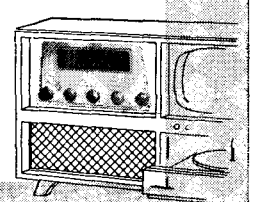

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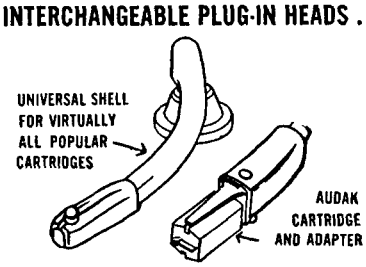

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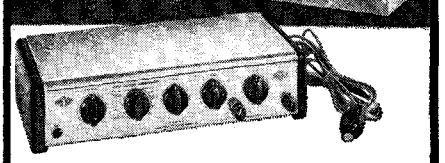

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IN noting the advent of so welcome a musical show as "Wonderful Town" (see page 67), it is singular justice to be able to direct attention to the actuality as well as the memory of a predecessor which prepared the way for it all of a decade and a half ago. Goddard Lieberson's astute devotion to the best works of our musical stage has already sparked revivals of "Pal Joey" and "Porgy and Bess" through brilliantly conceived recordings for Columbia which created a demand for the live thing; if his work on behalf of "On Your Toes" yields a similar dividend, both the public and R. Rodgers should regard him affectionately.

It is one thing to take a sequence of such gilded tunes as "It's Gotta Be Love," "Quiet Night," "On Your Toes," "Small Hotel," and "Glad to be Unhappy" and make a congenial medley of them. It's another thing to add such delightful reminiscenses of the ironic talent of Lorenz Hart and the magnetic response to it of Richard Rodgers as "It's Gotta Be Love," "The Heart Is Quicker Than the Eye," "Too Good for the Average Man," and "Questions and Answers" to a total of music and word values that please, delight, and stimulate. If you can conceive of the full-length treatment of "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" as a bonus in any recording, you have some idea of the lively virtues of this enterprise.

The relevance of "On Your Toes" to many things that followed is no contained in the mere fact that i originally offered congenial work fo the talents of such people as Tamar Geva, Ray Bolger, and Monty Wool ley. Taking cognizance of such topi cal matter (circa 1936) as the reviva of American interest in the ballet an the attention of the WPA to the art in general, it moved easily and effec tively in an atmosphere not hithert considered suitable for the "popular musical stage. George Balanchine' participation in it was also historic as an ice-breaker as well as a pace setter for the latter contributions, bal letically, of Agnes de Mille, Jerom Robbins, Anthony Tudor, Hany Holm, etc.

All of these considerations migh have produced a merely formal obei sance to the past had not the origina musical text been sufficiently flexibl to respond to a certain amount o adaptation under Lehman Engel' understanding leadership, with an ac cent suitable to today's somewha altered tempo. The new voice o Portia Nelson is both suave and sty lish in the major opportunities of th score—"Small Hotel," "Glad to B Unhappy," "On Your Toes," etc.—an Jack Cassidy is decidedly good i the material originally conceived fo Bolger. For the gay irreverencies o "The Heart Is Quicker Than the Eye and "Too Good for the Average Man, Laurel Shelby is better than on would dare ask. A subsidiary, bu noteworthy feature, is the excellen background work by duo-pianist Stan Freeman and Cy Walters, horn ist Julius Singer of the Philharmonic Symphony, etc.

In further musical terms, Columbia' "On Your Toes" is distinguished by bright, well-paced version of "Slaugh ter on Tenth Avenue," in the full length equivalent of the action dance by Bolger. Simultaneously, it may b heard in equal length and with small additional dash of orchestra virtuosity in a Boston "Pops" ver sion directed by Arthur Fiedler (RC Victor LM 1726, $5.72). In the latte the company includes excerpts fro Copland's "Rodeo," Bernstein's "Fanc Free," Menotti's "Sebastian," an Stravinsky's "Petrouchka." Somewha impulsively, if practically, the jacke cover proclaims, " 'Slaughter on Tent Avenue' and other ballet selections, which may cause a lifted eyebrow o two in the Menotti-Stravinsky set.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

Portia Nelson—"suave and stylish."

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Testing and Tasting

R. D. DARRELL

ONE notable phenomenon of the passionate quest for the Holy Grail of sound "fidelity" is the avid exploitation of apt "demonstration" materials to display the latest triumphs of recording and reproducing techniques. The "Ionisations" and "Military" Symphonies of yesterday, the "Three-Cornered Hats" and "Ilya Mourometzs" of today, and who knows what tomorrow, often are plugged so indefatigably in sales-promotions that it's easy to overlook their genuine value, under less propagandistic circumstances, for making "performance-checks" on the equipment we now own or are contemplating purchasing.

Most of us concerned with the best practicable sound reproduction (and in maintaining our present equipment in optimum operating condition) have our own favorite check-discs or passages. But surely there should be better standardization of such materials than that currently dictated by individual tastes and fan fashions. The latest attempt to meet this need is welcome both for its own obvious usefulness and as a forecast of things to come on what ought to be a considerably larger scale.

This is a seven-inch Columbia LP issued for use with Harold D. Weiler's "High Fidelity Simplified" (reviewed on page 35), now available for only 25¢ to purchasers of that book, via an application card enclosed in current printings. The disc itself includes nine bands illustrating selected passages (from recent standard Columbia releases) for violin, cello, string bass, trombones, piano, organ, cymbals, triangle, and bass drum.

The difficulty (and part of the fun) in making performance checks with such materials is in evaluating the results objectively—that is, free from the emotional effects of the music as such. Even a minute or so, as here, may be long enough for the effects of expressive contexts to obscure and warp what should be, in this case, abstract judgments of sound qualities alone.

Complete objectivity is possible, of course, only when all esthetic and human elements are eliminated: when pure or complex frequencies are measured by a passionless meter or oscilloscope. Performance "test" (rather than merely "check") discs are made for this purpose too, but while they're invaluable for engineers, their general usefulness is limited. There are no practicable instrumental means, unfortunately, for testing the acoustical response of an over-all system to actual music.

Nevertheless, it's still possible for the meter- and 'scope-less home experimenter to utilize such test discs in enhancing his understanding of how his phonograph—and his own hearing—works. The best one to come along—at least since the fascinating Cook Laboratories "White and Gray Noise" record (Series 20, $4.00)—is The Dubbings Company's Phono-Test (D-100, $3.50). This first of a projected series includes a completely "unmodulated" band, for checking "rumble" and other system noise or hum; a band of 3,000-cps pure tone for checking turntable "wow" and "flutter"; and five bands of 400-cps pure tone in 3-db steps of increasing intensity levels, for checking stylus "tracking" and optimum stylus-force adjustment. There also are provisions for conventional frequency-run checks: thirteen bands of pure tones in steps ranging from 30 to 12,000 cps.

If these last are used for ear (rather than meter) checking, it must be remembered that our judgments of relative loudness are by no means reliable. Depending on the reference level chosen, our ears' response may fall off considerably at both low and high frequencies (the famous Fletcher-Munson effect). Then, too, "standing-wave" patterns in our listening room result in strongly marked minima (nodes) and maxima of intensity, although this effect can be partially counteracted by walking around the room and roughly "averaging" the various intensity levels. Even in evaluating the sound qualities of actual music, indeed, fairer judgments can be made if we don't listen in one spot, but move about and even squat down occasionally to sample the distribution effects in both horizontal and vertical planes.

So "check" and "test" records bring us not only to quasi-objective but even peripatetic listening! Scornful non-experimenters may rightfully claim that all this leads away from rather than toward any true musical enjoyment. But in esthetics as in proverb, the longest way around may be the shortest way home.

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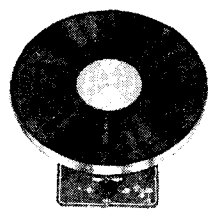

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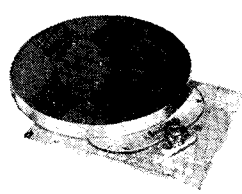

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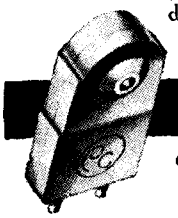

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TOSCANINI, BEETHOVEN

(*Continued from page 53*)

taken as it came into being in the mind of its creator, the incomparable clarity of all the details without undue dwelling on any of them for its separate sake.

He is sometimes accused of being prone at times to over-rapid tempi. I myself cannot agree with this, and least of all in the present records. Mine, of course, is a purely personal point of view: I rejoice in Toscanini's tempi, I suppose, because they correspond to my own notions of how this or that section of the work in question ought to go. It is sometimes respectfully urged that his speed at some point or other makes things difficult for the singers or the players. To that I would reply that if some singers cannot "do themselves justice" now and then at the pace set them by Toscanini they should go home and try to improve their technique, for they are there for the music, not the music for them, and if now and then the dramatic situation calls for a tempo such as that set by Toscanini it is they who should suffer some inconvenience, not Verdi, let us say, or Puccini. As for the well-known difficulties that sometimes confront the orchestral players in a Beethoven symphony, the solution of the problem seems to me quite easy. It is on record that when some violinist or other protested against a technically awkward passage Beethoven's reply was, "What do I care for your fiddle?": and knowing him as we do we may be fairly sure that there was a colorful adjective before the noun. In cases of this kind he just didn't care. All that mattered to him was the realization of his ideas, or the nearest approximation possible to this in practice; and I myself feel that in the occasional instances in the symphonies of a slight disagreement between the idea and the perfect technical realization of it we must do what I fancy Beethoven himself did—let the idea determine, without any compromise, the tempo, and give the player a bill of indemnity if here and there in a passage he falls below the highest technical standard. Anyhow, in the cases I have in mind in these records Toscanini and his excellent players hardly allow us even to suspect that a difficulty has ever existed.

Beethoven's characteristic musical style—a process of building up by a series of antitheses, ranging from the change of a single note in a harmony to the prolonged statement-and-rejoinder of different melodic, rhythmic,

or color-elements, and then from these to that apposition of ideas that gives the great works of his maturity their "dramatic" character—brings out to perfection in the records one of Toscanini's most striking accomplishments, his ability to show forth the infinite variety of a long work without any undue dwelling on detail (as is the bad way of prima donna conductors) for mere details' and effects' sake. In these magnificent records we can see Beethoven's universal mind as it really was, grasp each work as an individual architectonic whole. The frequent swift interchange of repartee between voice and voice, as in the sparkling finale of the No. 1, for example, the incessant toss of the ball from player to player without ever a fumble in the perfect catch, is a joy to the ear and to the spirit: the texture is always lucidity itself.

Equally remarkable is the handling of the later, more "dramatic" works ("dramatic", of course, in the musical, not the literary sense of the term); every contrast of detail is there, yet through the whole performance of each work we feel the ever-presence of the one dominating idea—and it is a different idea in each symphony. The recordings of the "Eroica" and the No. 9 are stupendous in their total impact; the "Pastoral," as Toscanini sees and reproduces it, reveals itself as what it really is, not a by-product of the mighty mind that conceived the No. 3 and the No. 9, but a masterwork in its own right; the No. 5 is rescued from the complacent routine into which it has tended to fall during the last fifty years of popularity. These records, indeed, are a joy to the connoisseur and an education to all musicians, even to those of us—indeed, most of all to those of us—who flattered ourselves that we already knew and understood our Beethoven pretty thoroughly.

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The Spoken Word

ENGLAND AND NEW ENGLAND

IT does not go without saying that a poet is always the best one to read his own works, yet what one would give to have clear, high-fidelity recordings of Pope, of Gray, of Tennyson, or of Matthew Arnold reading their own words in their own cadences, in their own accents. One could tell more about "the artist's intent" perhaps from the modulation of his own phrases than from any exposition of his own of his meaning. The Library of Congress has made available (now to the general public) records of contemporary poets, and the interest, esthetic and psychological, of records of poets reading their own works could hardly be better illustrated than by the recordings of T. S. Eliot and Robert Frost.* Each, in the first place, reads extremely well, is master of his own resources of sound, pitch, and rhythm, and each has a superb sense of pause and timing. Each is—or sounds—remarkably himself and convincingly authentic. The voice in each case is the voice of a virtuoso, and of one who could not conceivably be mistaken for anyone else, as the poems they read could not be confused with those of any other living poet once they had been heard or read (perhaps particularly when heard).

Doubtless one reads into these records much that one has previously known about these two poets. But one suspects that hearing T. S. Eliot read for the first time "The Waste Land," and perhaps having met the poem for the first time too, there is much that would be clear from the very reciting that no textual analysis could convey. This cultivated speech, a bland semi-international English, more purely English than any native-born Englishman's could be is instructive: the Platonized English speech of a Harvard-bred boy from St. Louis, clearly successful in a longing and a determination to melt mellifluously into the English scene, the cultivated upper-class English scene, that upper class which can quote, always with a touch of deliberate Britishism, French and Italian and even ancient Indian texts. There is the dryness, the communicated sense of sterility and scepticism in the reading of "The Waste Land," and that special refrainlike cadence, that subtlety of modulated repetition which is perhaps Mr. Eliot's special contribution to the melody of English verse.

But very early, as in "Sweeney Among the Nightingales," the ecclesiastical timbre, the churchly rhythms creep in, and by "Ash Wednesday" the clergyman, albeit the highly poetical clergyman, dominates the voice. It is the clergyman officiating at a funeral service or somberly meditating in a sermon on mortality. "This music is successful with a 'dying fall.'" An M. A. thesis at least could be written on Mr. Eliot's way of speaking poetry, the sources of his speech in St. Louis,

at Harvard, in London, and at many a Church of England service and in the most select literary coteries. And, as usual, such an inquiry would not be able to track down the original beat, the authentic rhythm that comes from the poet's heart and that, for all his studied attitudes, is his magic and his power.

ROBERT FROST'S voice was made for the reading of Robert Frost's poetry. There is the constant hint of wonder and the constant bite of common sense, the tones of New England and the overtones of feeling, always genuine and never overwrought or faked or pretentious or rhetorical. The best and most characteristic poems are here, and they are read with that deceptive dryness, touched with the richness and resonance that are Mr. Frost's gift to the reading of poetry and to poetry itself.

These discs are beautifully recorded. The poets, in their unmistakable poetic persons, are in the room speaking, and they evoke the poet in any listener. One feels one has never quite felt before the exact quality of the lines

> For I have promises to keep,
> And miles to go before I sleep,
> And miles to go before I sleep.

until one hears Frost read them. One realizes as one listens how much of poetry *is* in the spoken word and in the manner of the speaking.

—IRWIN EDMAN.

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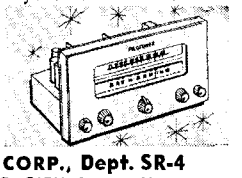

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Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

"I HAVE NOT CHANGED MY MIND"

I AM NOT INTERESTED in music and I would not be able to tell the difference between Pablo Casals's cello and anybody else's fiddle. But he is obviously a citizen first and a cello player second. Everyone should read his grand and decent statement [*SR* March 28] and learn from it.

V. WAGNER.

Philadelphia, Pa.

EVERY MUSIC LOVER WHO also respects a man of principle must say "amen" to the sentiments expressed by Pablo Casals in his recent letter to the *SR*. In years to come it will prove again that it was the artist who was the practical man of politics rather than the politicians, who deemed expediency superior to principle.

M. JOHN TAYLOR.

Alexandria, Va.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *These are samplings from similar expressions of opinion received from our readers. Several of them, including Lillian Gale of Cleveland, Ohio, enclosed copies of communications they had sent to Pablo Casals in Prades.*

BULLETIN FROM VINCENT

MAY I THANK YOU for the encouragement you gave me through your review of my "Lohengrin" recording for Urania? You have raised a question which I thought you might like to have answered. This was: "If he can do in the opera house what he does on these discs . . . etc." I have just sung "Lohengrin" for the first time since recording it . . . in Graz . . . which has the largest audience-capacity house in the German-speaking countries I am enclosing a transcript of the criticisms pertaining to my performance.

GEORGE VINCENT.

Basle, Switzerland.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Since the reviews contain such phrases as "ein idealer Gralsritter," "Vincent singt nach alter Wagner-schule mit Pathos und trompetenton," etc., it would appear that Vincent may be coming our way before too long. As for the Graz theatre, it's more City Center than Met size.*

UNRELEASED SCHUMANN

I WAS INTERESTED TO read in a recent issue of the English publication *The Record Collector* that several of Elisabeth Schumann's interpretations of Schubert, Brahms, and Strauss lieder, recorded in 1938, have never, for some obscure reason, been issued. Mention is made, however, of the excellence of these recordings.

LELAND O. GREENE.

Berkeley, Calif.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *As reader Greene goes on to suggest, they would make an excellent basis for a memorial tribute to Schumann.*

STRAUSS AS INNOVATOR

C. G. BURKE, IN A DISCUSSION of Carl Nielsen, refers to Richard Strauss's "daring revolutionary demonstrations." Thinking back over discussions of Strauss in recent issues of your magazine . . . I am convinced that Strauss is rapidly approaching a state of musical canonization. I object! The beatification has no doubt already been achieved, but I stand as one devil's advocate determined to disprove the validity of the miracles. What does Mr. Burke mean by "daring revolutionary demonstrations" in connection with Strauss? I am willing to grant the term for Stravinsky. But in the context, Mr. Burke clearly means musical innovations, and Strauss was not a *musical* innovator. Musically, he didn't do anything that Wagner hadn't done before him. . . .

WILL C. JUMPER.

Modesto, Calif.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *No doubt what Mr. Burke had in mind were the things that caused Strauss to be denounced by the same critics who wrote pamphlets, treatises, and substantial volumes extoling the art of Wagner. It may appear, at this date, that "Salome," "Elektra," and "Don Quixote" were "merely" Wagnerian derivations, but they were the battlegrounds for a whole esthetic warfare, with campaigns and countercampaigns as clearly marked as the ridges around Gettysburg.*

AMERICAN REPERTORY

WITH ALL THE NEW emphasis on serious American music, there are still many American scores to be recorded on LP I'd walk a mile to hear any of the following: "The Cradle Will Rock" (Marc Blitzstein), "No For An Answer" (Marc Blitzstein), "Johnny Johnson" (Kurt Weill), Piano Sonata (Aaron Copland) "One Hundred Twenty-fifth Street" (Gershwin), "Angels" (Carl Ruggles) "Vtebsk" (Aaron Copland), also the same composer's Symphonies Nos. 1 and 2 "Cherubic Hymn" (Howard Hanson) "Macbeth" (Ernest Bloch), "Ballet Mécanique" (George Antheil).

RICHARD FETTERS.

McKeesport, Pa.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Is there a shoe manufacturer who would like to sponsor this "Walk a Mile" series?*

IN QUEST OF MACDONALD

DO ANY OF YOUR readers know where may secure a recording of Jeanette MacDonald's rendition of "San Francisco" from the motion picture of the same name? I should like a copy of that re

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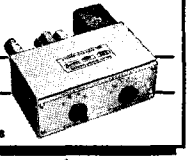
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cording and would appreciate it very much if someone can direct me to the right source.

ARTHUR M. TINGLEY.
Boston, Mass.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Reader Tingley is an employee of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, who can be reached at the Department of Public Utilities, 167 State House, Boston, Mass.*

TOSCANINI-LA SCALA?

SOME TIME AGO, I believe, in your columns and elsewhere I noted mention of the fact that Arturo Toscanini had made some recording with the Scala orchestra of excerpts from "Mefistofele," Rossini overtures, etc. Since a considerable time has elapsed since these were mentioned I am curious to know just what has happened.

I fear they may not have passed muster with the Maestro, but I hope there is still a chance that these may be released.

JAMES W. KEELER.
Drexel Hill, Pa.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Our fears, and hopes, are mutual.*

VALUES IN "WALKÜRES"

IN YOUR REVIEW OF "Die Walküre," Act I, in Decca set DX 121 you mention the magnetic quality of the Lehmann-Melchior-List disc, but fail to state that the price is $5.72 for the superior performance on Victor.

Is one to infer that the twelve minutes of "Hagen's Ruf" in the Decca set justifies the additional $6?

AUGUST ZIMMERMAN.
Baltimore, Md.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *A re-reading of the review indicates clearly the writer's belief that "the interest here is Maria Müller or nothing"—which is far from an over-all endorsement of content or price.*

REPORT FROM SZIGETI

THIS PRESENT TOUR IS REALLY an unforgettable and indescribable experience: up to now twelve sold-out concerts, of which four in Tokyo; by end of April I'll have had ten in Tokyo and some twenty-five to twenty-six altogether. . . . Of course no time for browsing, but I did see a Debussy Cello Sonata played by Marechal and Casadesus and heard records by Nikisch, Sarasate, Carl Flesch, Vasa Prihoda, Busoni, Capet, etc. Record concerts everywhere (in clubs, not over the air).

My (for here) "new" releases (Bloch Concerto, Schubert "Fantasy," Bartók "Portrait") came out on 78's.

JOSEPH SZIGETI.
Tokyo, Japan.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *We hope Mr. Szigeti won't mind our sharing with SR readers this personal note addressed to one of the editors.*

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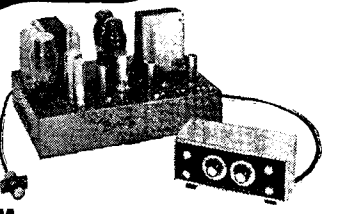

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Pop Roundup

BUNK JOHNSON'S LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

APPARENTLY in jazz, as elsewhere, conciliation is in the air. Recently the bastions of tradition were shaken when Columbia released a collection entitled simply BUNK JOHNSON AND HIS BAND (GL 520), a set which has been termed the late cornetist's "musical last will and testament." For this particular recording he dropped the old-line New Orleans sidemen who had worked with him on all of his previous sessions. Those men, he maintained, had been selected for him by his critic-sponsors, and he could reveal now that he had considered them passé. Bunk had not particularly relished his own rcle as a museum piece. So, for this particular session, he assembled a group of his own favorite jazzmen, most of them recruited from contemporary "swing" bands, and proceeded to knock off a collection of pops, rumbas, and assorted nick-nacks in an interesting, vital style that defies classification, except as "jazz." This endeavor reveals the timeless quality of the true jazz spirit, a factor quite apart from tune or technique. Bunk Johnson, who once taught Louis Armstrong, made even the tritest tunes cor.e out as "jazz."

That jazz spirit, which he and not too many others have possessed, could be the ability to generate a pulse throughout spontaneously fashioned melodic phrases, a pulse that slightly anticipates the predetermined beat, propels it and infuses it with personal dynamism and warmth. And the phenomenon of jazz occurs when this anticipation creates a particular lilt without speeding the tempo. For that matter, the definition pretty well covers the idea of "swing," or "swing it," from which the popular term of the Thirties derived.

To many, the acid test of a jazzman is the way he plays the blues, and the best instrumental blues in some time stems from a studio JAM SESSION organized by Norman Granz for his JATP series (Mercury MGC 601 and 602). It's "Funky Blues," a slow drag opus included in Vol II, and it features no less than five of the top saxophonists, along with such men as Oscar Peterson on piano, J. C. Heard on drums, etc. The three alto men—Johnny Hodges, Charlie Parker, and Benny Carter—blow in that order, with Parker, the "modernist," grabbing all honors. His is a live, preaching-talking blues, closest to the folk variety in essence. The sequence runs for one entire 12-inch LP side, establishing a wonderfully relaxed mood.

Discovery of a new jazz voice is usually exciting and this month we have "discovered" the pianist GEORGE WALLINGTON. He makes his solo appearance on a long-player from a new company, Progressive (PLP 3001). Wallington has a highly-developed technique and—for this idiom—a striking sense of form. Although he is of the extreme *avant-garde*, he develops his ideas forthrightly, logically, and maintains a strong, swingin' beat. His program is varied, including a number of his own compositions as well as sensitive interpretations of the ballads "I'll Remember April" and "I Didn't Know What Time It Was."

Another excellent young pianist commonly associated with the progressives is a one-time Teddy Wilson pupil, Dick Hyman. Hyman has abandoned jazz briefly, however, to turn out an unusual solo set of music, KURT WEILL, A PIANO PORTRAIT (Classic Editions CE 4001), which is the first in a projected "composer series."

Weill's music, stagey and vocal, would hardly seem ideal piano repertory, but Hyman has managed to make most of it quite interesting in his elaborate arrangements. Several of the songs have rarely been recorded previously. For example, "Sing Me Not a Ballad" from the ill-fated "Firebrand of Florence" (1945) and "To Love You and To Lose You" from "Johnny Johnson" (1936). Hyman does his best work, it seems to me, in "Moon-Faced, Starry-Eyed," a jazzy bit from "Street Scene."

—BILL SIMON.

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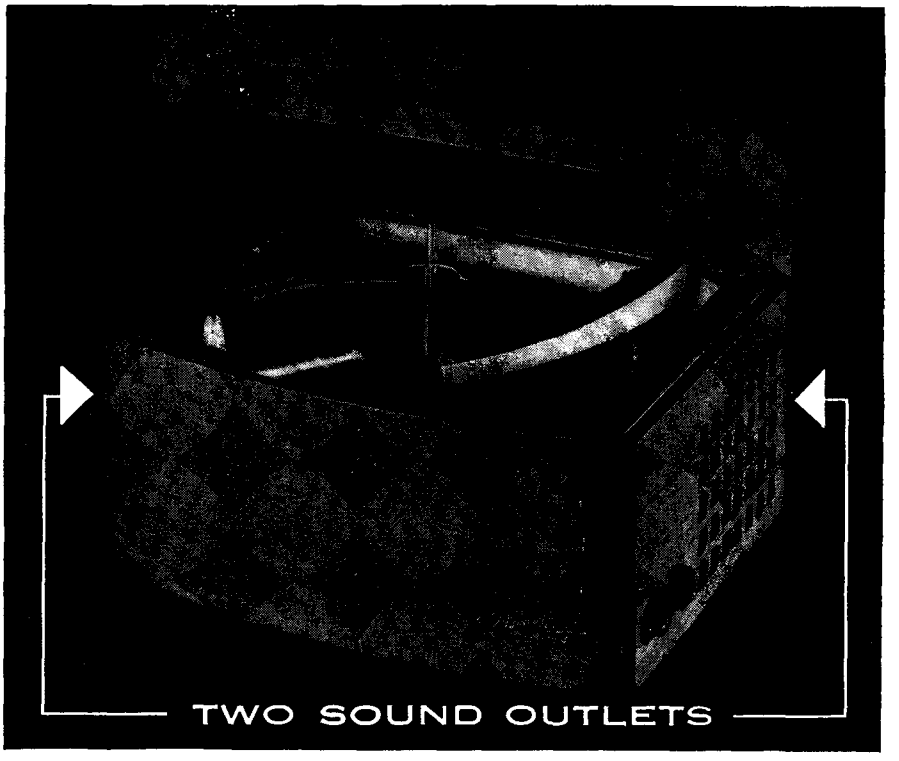

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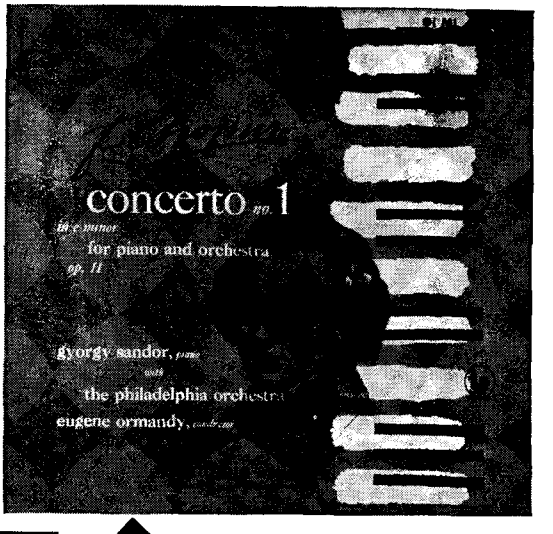

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